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THE

WORKS

OF

Samuel Johnſon, LL.D.

A NEW EDITION,

IN TWELVE VOLUMES.

WITH

AN ESSAY ON HIS LIFE AND GENIUS,

BY ARTHUR MURPHY, ESQ.

VOLUME THE THIRD.

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A

DISSERTATION

UPON THE

GREEK COMEDY,

TRANSLATED FROM BRUMOY.*

ADVERTISEMENT.

I CONCLUDE this work according to my promiſe, with an account of the Comick Theatre, and intreat the reader, whether a favourer or an enemy of the ancient Drama, not to paſs his cenſure upon the authors or upon me, without a regular peruſal of this whole work. For, though it ſeems to be compoſed of pieces of which each may precede or follow without dependance upon the other, yet all the parts, taken together, form a ſyſtem which would be de-

* Publiſhed by Mrs. Lennox in 4to, 1759. To the third volume of this work the following Advertiſement is prefixed. "In this "volume, the Diſcourſe on the Greek Comedy, and the General "Concluſion, are tranſlated by the celebrated author of the "Rambler. The Comedy of the Birds, and that of Peace, by a "young Gentleman. The Comedy of the Frogs, by the learned "and ingenious Dr. Gregory Sharpe. The Diſcourſe upon the "Cyclops, by John Bourrya, Eſq. The Cyclops, by Dr. Grainger, "author of the tranſlation of Tibullus." E.

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ſtroyed by their disjunction. Which way ſhall we come at the knowledge of the ancients' ſhows, but by comparing together all that is left of them? The value and neceſſity of this compariſon determined me to publiſh all, or to publiſh nothing. Beſides, the reflections on each piece, and on the general taſte of antiquity, which, in my opinion, are not without importance, have a kind of obſcure gradation, which I have carefully endeavoured to preſerve, and of which the thread would be loſt by him who ſhould ſlightly glance ſometimes upon one piece, and ſometimes upon another. It is a ſtructure which I have endeavoured to make as near to regularity as I could, and which muſt be ſeen in its full extent and in proper ſucceſſion. The reader who ſkips here and there over the book, might make a hundred objections which are either anticipated, or anſwered in thoſe pieces which he might have overlooked. I have laid ſuch ſtreſs upon the connexion of the parts of this work, that I have declined to exhauſt the ſubject, and have ſuppreſſed many of my notions, that I might leave the judicious reader to pleaſe himſelf by forming ſuch concluſions as I ſuppoſed him like to diſcover, as well as myſelf. I am not here attempting to prejudice the reader by an apology either for the ancients, or my own manner. I have not claimed a right of obliging others to determine, by my opinion, the degrees of eſteem which I think due to the authors of the Athenian Stage; nor do I think that their reputation in the preſent time, ought to depend upon my mode of thinking or expreſſing my thoughts, which I leave entirely to the judgment of the publick.

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A DISSERTATION, &c.

I.

Reasons why *Ariſtophanes* may be reviewed without tranſlating him entirely.

I WAS in doubt a long time, whether I ſhould meddle at all with the *Greek* comedy, both becauſe the pieces which remain are very few, the licentiouſneſs of *Ariſtophanes*, their author, is exorbitant, and it is very difficult to draw from the performances of a ſingle poet, a juſt idea of *Greek* comedy. Beſides, it ſeemed that tragedy was ſufficient to employ all my attention, that I might give a complete repreſentation of that kind of writing, which was moſt eſteemed by the *Athenians* and the wiſer *Greeks* *, particularly by *Socrates*, who ſet no value upon comedy or comick actors. But the very name of that drama, which in polite ages, and above all others in our own, has been ſo much advanced, that it has become equal to tragedy, if not preferable, incline me to think that I may be partly reproached with an imperfect work, if, after having

* There was a law which forbad any judge of the *Areopagus* to write comedy.

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gone as deep as I could into the nature of *Greek* tragedy, I did not at leaſt ſketch a draught of the comedy.

I then conſidered, that it was not wholly impoſſible to ſurmount, at leaſt in part, the difficulties which had ſtopt me, and to go ſomewhat farther than the learned writers*, who have publiſhed in *French* ſome pieces of *Ariſtophanes*; not that I pretend to make large tranſlations. The ſame reaſons which have hindered with reſpect to the more noble parts of the *Greek* drama, operate with double force upon my preſent ſubject. Though ridicule, which is the buſineſs of comedy, be not leſs uniform in all times, than the paſſions which are moved by tragick compoſitions; yet, if diverſity of manners may ſometimes diſguiſe the paſſions themſelves, how much greater change will be made in jocularities? The truth is, that they are ſo much changed by the courſe of time, that pleaſantry and ridicule become dull and flat much more eaſily than the pathetick becomes ridiculous.

That which is commonly known by the term jocular and comick, is nothing but a turn of expreſſion, an airy phantom, that muſt be caught at a particular point. As we loſe this point, we loſe the jocularity, and find nothing but dulneſs in its place. A lucky ſally, which has filled a company with laughter, will have no effect in print, becauſe it is ſhown ſingle and ſeparate from the circumſtance which gave it force. Many ſatirical jeſts, found in ancient books, have had the ſame fate; their ſpirit has evaporated by time, and have left nothing to us but inſipidity. None but the moſt biting paſſages have preſerved their points unblunted.

* Madame *Dacier*, M. *Boivin*.

But,

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But, beſides this objection, which extends univerſally to all tranſlations of *Ariſtophanes*, and many alluſions of which time has deprived us, there are looſe expreſſions thrown out to the populace to raiſe laughter from corrupt paſſions, which are unworthy of the curioſity of decent readers, and which ought to reſt eternally in proper obſcurity. Not every thing in this infancy of comedy was excellent, at leaſt it would not appear excellent at this diſtance of time, in compariſon of compoſitions of the ſame kind, which lie before our eyes; and this is reaſon enough to ſave me the trouble of tranſlating, and the reader that of peruſing. As for that ſmall number of writers who delight in thoſe delicacies, they give themſelves very little trouble about tranſlations, except it be to find fault with them; and the majority of people of wit, like comedies that may give them pleaſure, without much trouble of attention, and are not much diſpoſed to find beauties in that which requires long deductions to find it beautiful. If *Helen* had not appeared beautiful to the *Greeks* and *Trojans* but by force of argument, we had never been told of the *Trojan* war.

On the other ſide, *Ariſtophanes* is an author more conſiderable than one would imagine. The Hiſtory of *Greece* could not paſs over him, when it comes to touch upon the people of *Athens*; this alone might procure him reſpect, even when he was not conſidered as a comick poet. But when his writings are taken into view, we find him the only author from whom may be drawn a juſt idea of the comedy of his age; and farther, we find in his pieces, that he

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often makes attacks upon the tragick writers, particularly upon the three chief, whoſe valuable remains we have had under examination; and, what is yet worſe, fell ſometimes upon the ſtate, and upon the gods themſelves.

The chief heads of this diſcourſe.

II. Theſe conſiderations have determined me to follow, in my repreſentation of this writer, the ſame method which I have taken in ſeveral tragick pieces, which is that of giving an exact analyſis as far as the matter would allow, from which I deduce four important ſyſtems. Firſt, Upon the nature of the comedy of that age, without omitting that of *Menander**. Secondly, Upon the vices and government of the *Athenians*. Thirdly, Upon the notion we ought to entertain of *Ariſtophanes*, with reſpect to *Eſchylus*, *Sophocles*, and *Euripides*. Fourthly, Upon the jeſt which he makes upon the gods. Theſe things will not be treated in order, as a regular diſcourſe ſeems to require, but will ariſe ſometimes ſeparately, ſometimes together, from the view of

* *Menander*, an *Athenian*, ſon of *Diopethes* and *Hegeſtrates*, was apparently the moſt eminent of the writers of the new comedy. He had been a ſcholar of *Theophraſtus*: his paſſion for the women brought infamy upon him: he was ſquint-eyed, and very lively. Of the one hundred and eighty comedies, or, according to *Suidas*, the eighty which he compoſed, and which are all ſaid to be tranſlated by *Terence*, we have now only a few fragments remaining. He flouriſhed about the 115th Olympiad, 318 years before the Chriſtian Æra. He was drowned as he was bathing in the port of *Pireus*. I have told in another place, what is ſaid of one *Philemon*, his antagoniſt, not ſo good a poet as himſelf, but one who often gained the prize. This *Philemon* was older than him, and was much

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of each particular comedy, and from the reflections which this free manner of writing will allow. I ſhall conclude with a ſhort view of the whole, and ſo finiſh my deſign.

III. I ſhall not repeat here what Madame *Dacier*, and ſo many others before her, have collected of all that can be known relating to the hiſtory of comedy. Its beginnings are as obſcure as thoſe of tragedy, and there is an appearance that we take theſe two words in a more extenſive meaning; they had both the ſame original, that is, they began among the feſtivals of the vintage, and were not diſtinguiſhed from one another but by a burleſque or ſerious chorus, which made all the ſoul and all the body. But, if we give theſe words a ſtricter ſenſe, according to the notion which has ſince been formed, comedy was produced after tragedy, and was in many reſpects a ſequel and imitation of the works of *Eſchylus*. It is in reality nothing more than an action ſet before the ſight by the ſame artifice of repreſentation. Nothing is different but the object, which is merely ridicule. This original of true comedy

Hiſtory of comedy.

much in faſhion in the time of *Alexander the Great*. He expreſſed all his wiſhes in two lines, 'To have health, and fortune, and 'pleaſure, and never to be in debt, is all I deſire.' He was very covetous, and was pictured with his fingers hooked, ſo that he ſet his comedies at a high price. He lived about a hundred years, ſome ſay a hundred and one. Many tales are told of his death; *Valerius Maximus* ſays, that he died with laughing at a little incident: ſeeing an aſs eating his figs, he ordered his ſervant to drive her away; the man made no great haſte, and the aſs eat them all, 'Well done, ſays *Philemon*, now give her ſome wine.' —*Apuleius* and *Quintilian* placed this writer much below *Menander*, but give him the ſecond place.

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will be eaſily admitted, if we take the word of *Horace*, who muſt have known better than us the true dates of dramatick works. This poet ſupports the ſyſtem which I have endeavoured to eſtabliſh in the ſecond diſcourſe* ſo ſtrongly as to amount to demonſtrative proof.

Horace † expreſſes himſelf thus, "*Theſpis* is ſaid to "have been the firſt inventor of a ſpecies of tragedy, "in which he carried about in carts, players ſmeared "with the dregs of wine, of whom ſome ſung and "others declaimed." This was the firſt attempt both of tragedy and comedy; for *Theſpis* made uſe only of one peaker, without the leaſt appearance of dialogue. "*Eſchylus* afterwards exhibited them with more dig- "nity. He placed them on a ſtage, ſomewhat above "the ground, covered their faces with maſks, put "buſkins on their feet, dreſſed them in trailing robes, "and made them ſpeak in a more lofty ſtyle." *Horace* omits invention of dialogue, which we learn from *Ariſtotle* ‡. But, however, it may be well enough inferred from the following words of *Horace*; this completion is mentioned while he ſpeaks of *Eſchylus*, and therefore to *Eſchylus* it muſt be aſcribed: "Then "firſt appeared the old comedy, with great ſucceſs "in its beginning." Thus we ſee that the *Greek* comedy aroſe after tragedy, and by conſequence tragedy was its parent. It was formed in imitation of *Eſchylus*, the inventor of the tragick drama; or, to go yet higher into antiquity, had its original from *Homer*, who was the guide of *Eſchylus*. For, if we credit *Ariſtotle* §, comedy had its birth from the *Margetes*, a ſatirical

* *Greek Theatre*, part i. vol. i. † *Hor.* Poet. v. 275.
‡ Poet. ch. 4. § Poet. ch. 4.

poem

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poem of *Homer*, and tragedy from the *Iliad* and *Odyſſey*. Thus the deſign and artifice of comedy were drawn from *Homer* and *Eſchylus*. This will appear leſs ſurpriſing, ſince the ideas of the human mind are always gradual, and arts are ſeldom invented but by imitation. The firſt idea contains the ſeed of the ſecond; this ſecond, expanding itſelf, gives birth to a third; and ſo on. Such is the progreſs of the mind of man; it proceeds in its productions ſtep by ſtep, in the ſame manner as nature multiplies her works by imitating, or repeating her own act, when ſhe ſeems moſt to run into variety. In this manner it was that comedy had its birth, its increaſe, its improvement, its perfection, and its diverſity.

Who is author of comedy.

IV. But the queſtion is, who was the happy author of that imitation, and that ſhow, whether only one like *Eſchylus* of tragedy, or whether they were ſeveral? for neither *Horace*, nor any before him, explained this *. This poet only quotes three writers who had

* 'The alterations, which have been made in tragedy, were 'perceptible, and the authors of them unknown; but comedy 'has lain in obſcurity, being not cultivated, like tragedy, from 'the time of its original: for it was long before the magiſtrates 'began to give comick choruſes. It was firſt exhibited by actors, 'who played voluntarily, without orders of the magiſtrates. 'From the time that it began to take ſome ſettled form, we 'know its authors, but are not informed who firſt uſed maſks, 'added prologues, increaſed the numbers of the actors, and 'joined all the other things which now belong to it. The firſt 'that thought of forming comick fables were *Epicharmus* and '*Phormys*, and conſequently this manner came from *Sicily*: '*Crates* was the firſt *Athenian* that adopted it, and forſook the 'practice of groſs raillery that prevailed before.' *Ariſtot.* ch. 5. *Crates* flouriſhed in the 82d Olympiad, 450 years before our Æra, twelve or thirteen years before *Ariſtophanes*.

reputation

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reputation in the old Comedy, *Eupolis* *, *Cratinus* †, and *Ariſtophanes*, of whom he ſays, 'That they, and 'others who wrote in the ſame way, reprehended the 'faults of particular perſons with exceſſive liberty.' Theſe are probably the poets of the greateſt reputation, though they were not the firſt, and we know the names of many others ‡. Among theſe three we may be ſure that *Ariſtophanes* had the greateſt character, ſince not only the king of *Perſia* ‖ expreſſed a high eſteem of him to the *Grecian* ambaſſadors, as of a man extremely uſeful to his country, and *Plato* § rated him ſo high, as to ſay, that the graces reſided in his boſom; but likewiſe becauſe he is the only writer of whom any comedies have made their way down to us, through the confuſion of times. There are not indeed any proofs that he was the inventor of comedy, properly ſo called, eſpecially ſince he had not only predeceſſors who wrote in the ſame kind, but it is at leaſt a ſign, that he had contributed more than any other to bring comedy to

* *Eupolis* was an *Athenian*; his death, which we ſhall mention preſently, is repreſented differently by authors, who almoſt all agree that he was drowned. *Elian* adds an incident which deſerves to be mentioned: he ſays (book x. Of Animals), that one *Augeas* of *Eleuſis*, made *Eupolis* a preſent of a fine maſtiff, who was ſo faithful to his maſter as to worry to death a ſlave who was carrying away ſome of his comedies. He adds, that when the poet died at *Egene*, his dog ſtaid by his tomb till he periſhed by grief and hunger.

† *Cratinus* of *Athens*, who was ſon of *Callimedes*, died at the age of ninety-ſeven. He compoſed twenty comedies, of which nine had the prize: he was a daring writer, but a cowardly warrior.

‡ *Hertelius* has collected the ſentences of fifty *Greek* poets of the different ages of comedy.

‖ Interlude of the ſecond act of the comedy intitled *The Acharniens*.

§ Epigram attributed to *Plato*.

the

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the perfection in which he left it. We ſhall, therefore, not inquire farther, whether regular comedy was the work of a ſingle mind, which ſeems yet to be unſettled, or of ſeveral contemporaries, ſuch as theſe which *Horace* quotes. We muſt diſtinguiſh three forms which comedy wore, in conſequence of the genius of the writers, or of the laws of the magiſtrates, and the change of the government of many into that of few.

The old, middle, and new comedy.

That comedy*, which *Horace* calls the ancient, and which, according to his account, was after *Eſchylus*, retained ſomething of its original ſtate, and of the licentiouſneſs which it practiſed, while it was yet without regularity, and uttered looſe jokes and abuſe upon the paſſers-by from the cart of *Theſpis*. Though it was now properly modelled, as might have been worthy of a great theatre and a numerous audience, and deſerved the name of a regular comedy, it was not yet much nearer to decency. It was a repreſentation of real actions, and exhibited the dreſs, the motions, and the air, as far as could be done in a maſk, of any one who was thought proper to be ſacrificed to publick ſcorn. In a city ſo free, or to ſay better, ſo licentious as *Athens* was at that time, nobody was ſpared, not even the chief magiſtrate, nor the very judges, by whoſe voice comedies were allowed or prohibited. The inſolence of thoſe performances reached to open impiety, and ſport was made equally with men and

* This hiſtory of the three ages of comedy, and their different characters, is taken in part from the valuable fragments of *Platonius*.

gods.

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gods*. Theſe are the features by which the greateſt part of the compoſitions of *Ariſtophanes* will be known. In which it may be particularly obſerved, that not the leaſt appearance of praiſe will be found, and therefore certainly no trace of flattery or ſervility.

This licentiouſneſs of the poets, to which in ſome ſort *Socrates* fell a ſacrifice, at laſt was reſtrained by a law. For the government, which was before ſhared by all the inhabitants, was now confined to a ſettled number of citizens. It was ordered that no man's name ſhould be mentioned on the ſtage; but poetical malignity was not long in finding the ſecret of defeating the purpoſe of the law, and of making themſelves ample compenſation for the reſtraint laid upon authors, by the neceſſity of inventing falſe names. They ſet themſelves to work upon known and real characters, ſo that they had now the advantage of giving a more exquiſite gratification to the vanity of poets, and the malice of ſpectators. One had the refined pleaſure of ſetting others to gueſs, and the other that of gueſſing right by naming the maſks. When pictures are ſo like, that the name is not wanted, nobody inſcribes it. The conſequence of the law, therefore, was nothing more than to make that done with delicacy, which was done groſsly before; and the art, which was expected would be confined within the limits of duty, was only partly tranſgreſſed with more ingenuity. Of this *Ariſtophanes*, who was comprehended in this law, gives us good examples in ſome of his poems. Such was that which was afterwards called the middle comedy.

* It will be ſhown how and in what ſenſe this was allowed.

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The new comedy, or that which followed, was again an excellent refinement, preſcribed by the magiſtrates, who, as they had before forbid the uſe of real names, forbad afterwards real ſubjects, and the train of choruſes* too much given to abuſe: ſo that the poets ſaw themſelves reduced to the neceſſity of bringing imaginary names and ſubjects upon the ſtage, which at once purified and enriched the theatre; for comedy from that time was no longer a fury armed with torches, but a pleaſing and innocent mirror of human life.

Chacun peint avec art dans ce nouveau miroir
S'y vit avec plaiſir, ou crut ne s'y pas voir!
L'avare des premiers rit du tableau fidelle
D'un avare ſouvent tracé ſur ſon modelle;
Et mille fois un fat finement exprimé
Méconnut le portrait ſur lui-même formé†.

The comedy of *Menander* and *Terence* is, in propriety of ſpeech, the fine comedy. I do not repeat all this after ſo many writers but juſt to recall it to memory, and to add to what they have ſaid, ſomething which they have omitted, a ſingular effect of publick edicts appearing in the ſucceſſive progreſs of the art. A naked hiſtory of poets and of poetry, ſuch as has been often given, is a mere body without ſoul, unleſs it be enlivened with an account of the birth, progreſs, and perfection of the art, and of the cauſes by which they were produced.

* Perhaps the chorus was forbid in the middle age of the comedy. *Platonius* ſeems to ſay ſo.

† *Deſpreaux Art. Poet. chant.* 8.

VI. To

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VI. To omit nothing essential which concerns this part, we shall say a word of the *Latin* comedy. When the arts passed from *Greece* to *Rome*, comedy took its turn among the rest: but the *Romans* applied themselves only to the new species, without chorus or personal abuse; though perhaps they might have played some translations of the old or the middle comedy, for *Pliny* gives an account of one which was represented in his own time. But the *Roman* comedy, which was modelled upon the last species of the *Greek*, hath nevertheless its different ages, according as its authors were rough or polished. The pieces of *Livius Andronicus* *, more ancient and less refined than those of the writers who learned the art from him, may be said to compose the first age, or the old *Roman* comedy and tragedy. To him you must join *Nevius* his contemporary, and *Ennius*, who lived some years after him. The second age comprises *Pacuvius*, *Cecilius*, *Accius*, and *Plautus*, unless it shall be thought better to reckon *Plautus* with *Terence*, to make the third and highest age of the *Latin* comedy, which may properly be called the new comedy, especially with regard to *Terence*, who was the friend of *Lelius*, and the faithful copier of *Menander*.

The *Latin* comedy.

But the *Romans*, without troubling themselves with this order of succession, distinguished their comedies by the dresses † of the players. The robe, called *prætexta*, with large borders of purple, being the formal dress of magistrates in their dignity, and in the

* The year of *Rome* 514, the first year of the 135th Olympiad.

† *Prætextæ*, *Togatæ*, *Tabernariæ*.

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exercise of their office, the actors, who had this dress, gave its name to the comedy. This is the same with that called *Trabeata* *, from *Trabea*, the dress of the consuls in peace, and the generals in triumph. The second species introduced the senators not in great offices, but as private men; this was called *Toges*, from *Togata*. The last species was named *Tabernaria*, from the tunick, or the common dress of the people, or rather from the mean houses which were painted on the scene. There is no need of mentioning the farces, which took their name and original from *Atella*, an ancient town of *Campania* in *Italy*, because they differed from the low comedy only by greater licentiousness; nor of those which were called *Palliates*, from the *Greek*, a cloak, in which the *Greek* characters were dressed upon the *Roman* stage, because that habit only distinguished the nation, not the dignity or character, like those which have been mentioned before. To say truth, these are but trifling distinctions; for, as we shall show in the following pages, comedy may be more usefully and judiciously distinguished, by the general nature of its subjects. As to the *Romans*, whether they had, or had not, reason for these names, they have left us so little upon the subject which is come down to us, that we need not trouble ourselves with a distinction which affords us no solid satisfaction. *Plautus* and *Terence*, the only authors of whom we are in possession, give us a fuller notion of the real nature of their comedy, with respect at least to their own times, than

* *Suet. de Claris Grammat.* says, that *C. Gelissus*, librarian to *Augustus*, was the author of it.

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can be received from names and terms, from which we have no real exemplification.

VII. Not to go too far out of our way, let us return to *Ariſtophanes*, the only poet in whom we can now find the *Greek* comedy. He is the ſingle writer, whom the violence of time has in ſome degree ſpared, after having buried in darkneſs, and almoſt in forgetfulneſs, ſo many great men, of whom we have nothing but the names and a few fragments, and ſuch ſlight memorials as are ſcarcely ſufficient to defend them againſt the enemies of the honour of antiquity; yet theſe memorials are like the laſt glimmer of the ſetting ſun, which ſcarce affords us a weak and fading light: yet from this glimmer we muſt endeavour to collect rays of ſufficient ſtrength to form a picture of the *Greek* comedy approaching as near as poſſible to the truth.

The *Greek* comedy is reduced only to *Ariſtophanes*.

Of the perſonal character of *Ariſtophanes* little is known; what account we can give of it muſt therefore be had from his comedies. It can ſcarcely be ſaid with certainty of what country he was: the invectives of his enemies ſo often called in queſtion his qualification as a citizen, that they have made it doubtful. Some ſaid, he was of *Rhodes*, others of *Egena*, a little iſland in the neighbourhood, and all agreed that he was a ſtranger. As to himſelf, he ſaid that he was the ſon of *Philip*, and born in the *Cydathenian* quarter; but he confeſſed that ſome of his fortune was in *Egena*, which was probably the original ſeat of his family. He was, however, formally declared a citizen of *Athens*, upon evidence, whether good or bad, upon a deciſive judgment, and this for having

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having made his judges merry by an application of a saying of *Telemachus**, of which this is the sense: "I am, as my mother tells me, the son of *Philip*; for "my own part, I know little of the matter, for what "child knows his own father?" This piece of merriment did him as much good, as *Archias* received from the oration of *Cicero* †, who said that that poet was a *Roman* citizen. An honour which, if he had not inherited by birth, he deserved for his genius.

Aristophanes ‡ flourished in the age of the great men of *Greece*, particularly of *Socrates* and *Euripides*, both of whom he outlived. He made a great figure during the whole *Peloponnesian* war, not merely as a comick poet by whom the people were diverted, but as the censor of the government, as a man kept in pay by the state to reform it, and almost to act the part of the arbitrator of the publick. A particular account of his comedies will best let us into his personal character as a poet, and into the nature of his genius, which is what we are most interested to know. It will, however, not be amiss to prepossess our readers a little by the judgments that had been passed upon him by the criticks of our own time, without forgetting one of the ancients that deserves great respect.

Aristophanes censured and praised.

VIII. "*Aristophanes*," says father *Rapin*, "is not exact in the contrivance of his "fables; his fictions are not probable; "he brings real characters upon the stage too coarsely "and too openly. *Socrates*, whom he ridicules so

* *Homer, Odyssey.* † *Orat. pro Archia Poeta.*

‡ In the 85th year of the Olympiad, 437 before our Æra, and 317 of the foundation of *Rome*.

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" much in his plays, had a more delicate turn of " burleſque than himſelf, and had his merriment with- " out his impudence. It is true, that *Ariſtophanes* " wrote amidſt the confuſion and licentiouſneſs of the " old comedy, and he was well acquainted with the " humour of the *Athenians*, to whom uncommon merit " always gave diſguſt, and therefore he made the " eminent men of his time the ſubject of his merri- " ment. But the too great deſire which he had to " delight the people by expoſing worthy characters " upon the ſtage, made him at the ſame time an un- " worthy man; and the turn of his genius to ridicule " was diſfigured and corrupted by the indelicacy and " outrageouſneſs of his manners. After all, his plea- " ſantry conſiſts chiefly in new-coined puffy language. " The diſh of twenty-ſix ſyllables, which he gives in " his laſt ſcene of his *Female Orators*, would pleaſe few " taſtes in our days. His language is ſometimes ob- " ſcure, perplexed and vulgar, and his frequent play " with words, his oppoſitions of contradictory terms, " his mixture of tragick and comick, of ſerious and " burleſque, are all flat; and his jocularity, if you " examine it to the bottom, is all falſe. *Menander* is " diverting in a more elegant manner; his ſtyle is " pure, clear, elevated, and natural; he perſuades like " an orator, and inſtructs like a philoſopher; and if " we may venture to judge upon the fragments which " remain, it appears that his pictures of civil life are " pleaſing, that he makes every one ſpeak according " to his character, that every man may apply his " pictures of life to himſelf, becauſe he always follows " nature, and feels for the perſonages which he brings " upon the ſtage. To conclude, *Plutarch*, in his com-

" pariſon

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" pariſon of theſe authors, ſays, that the Muſe of " *Ariſtophanes* is an abandoned proſtitute, and that of " *Menander* a modeſt woman."

It is evident that this whole character is taken from *Plutarch*. Let us now go on with this remark of father *Rapin*, ſince we have already ſpoken of the *Latin* comedy, of which he gives us a deſcription.

" With reſpect to the two *Latin* comick poets, " *Plautus* is ingenious in his deſigns, happy in his con- " ceptions, and fruitful of invention. He has, how- " ever, according to *Horace*, ſome low jocularities, and " thoſe ſmart ſayings, which made the vulgar laugh, " made him be pitied by men of higher taſte. It is " true, that ſome of his jeſts are extremely good, but " others likewiſe are very bad. To this every man " is expoſed, who is too much determined to make " ſallies of merriment; they endeavour to raiſe that " laughter by hyperboles, which would not ariſe by " a juſt repreſentation of things. *Plautus* is not quite " ſo regular as *Terence* in the ſcheme of his deſigns, " or in the diſtribution of his acts, but he is more " ſimple in his plot; for the fables of *Terence* are " commonly complex, as may be ſeen in his *Andrea*, " which contains two amours. It was imputed as a " fault to *Terence*, that, to bring more action upon " the ſtage, he made one *Latin* comedy out of two " *Greek*; but then *Terence* unravels his plot more na- " turally than *Plautus*, which *Plautus* did more na- " turally than *Ariſtophanes*; and though *Cæſar* calls " *Terence* but one half of *Menander*, becauſe, though " he had ſoftneſs and delicacy, there was in him ſome " want of ſprightlineſs and ſtrength; yet he has written " in a manner ſo natural and ſo judicious, that, though

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" he was then only a copy, he is now an original. No " author has ever had a more exact ſenſe of pure " nature. Of *Cecilius*, ſince we have only a few frag- " ments, I ſhall ſay nothing. All that we know of " him is told us by *Varrus*, that he was happy in the " choice of ſubjects."

Rapin omits many others for the ſame reaſon, that we have not enough of their works to qualify us for judges. While we are upon this ſubject, it will perhaps not diſpleaſe the reader to ſee what that critick's opinion is of *Lopes de Vega* and *Moliere*. It will appear, that, with reſpect to *Lopes de Vega*, he is rather too profuſe of praiſe: that in ſpeaking of *Moliere*, he is too parſimonious. This piece will, however, be of uſe to our deſign, when we ſhall examine to the bottom what it is that ought to make the character of comedy.

" No man has ever had a greater genius for comedy " than *Lopes de Vega* the *Spaniard*. He had a fertility " of wit, joined with great beauty of conception, and " a wonderful readineſs of compoſition; for he has " written more than three hundred comedies. His " name alone gave reputation to his pieces; for his " reputation was ſo well eſtabliſhed, that a work, which " came from his hands, was ſure to claim the ap- " probation of the public. He had a mind too ex- " tenſive to be ſubjected to rules, or reſtrained by " limits. For that reaſon he gave himſelf up to his " own genius, on which he could always depend " with confidence. When he wrote, he conſulted no " other laws than the taſte of his auditors, and regu- " lated his manner more by the ſucceſs of his work " than by the rules of reaſon. Thus he diſcarded all " ſcruples

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"ſcruples of unity, and all the ſuperſtitions of proba-
"bility." (This is certainly not ſaid with a deſign to praiſe him, and muſt be connected with that which immediately follows.) "But as for the moſt part "he endeavours at too much jocularity, and carries "ridicule to too much refinement; his conceptions "are often rather happy than juſt, and rather wild "than natural; for, by ſubtilizing merriment too far, "it becomes too nice to be true, and his beauties loſe "their power of ſtriking by being to delicate and "acute.

"Among us, nobody has carried ridicule in comedy "farther than *Moliere*. Our ancient comick writers "brought no characters higher than ſervants, to make "ſport upon the theatre; but we are diverted upon "the theatre of *Moliere* by marquiſes and people of "quality. Others have exhibited in comedy no ſpecies "of life above that of a citizen; but *Moliere* ſhows us "all *Paris*, and the court. He is the only man amongſt "us, who has laid open thoſe features of nature by "which he is exactly marked, and may be accurately "known. The beauties of his pictures are ſo na-
"tural, that they are felt by perſons of the leaſt diſ-
"cernment, and his power of pleaſantry received half "its force from his power of copying. His Miſan-
"thrope is, in my opinion, the moſt complete, and "likewiſe the moſt ſingular character that has ever "appeared upon the ſtage: but the diſpoſition of his "comedies is always defective ſome way or another. "This is all which we can obſerve in general upon "comedy."

Such are the thoughts of one of the moſt refined judges of works of genius, from which, though they are

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not all oraculous, ſome advantages may be drawn, as they always make ſome approaches to truth.

Madame *Dacier* *, having her mind full of the merit of *Ariſtophanes*, expreſſes herſelf in this manner: "No man had ever more diſcernment than him, in "finding out the ridiculous, nor a more ingenious "manner of ſhowing it to others. His remarks are "natural and eaſy, and, what very rarely can be "found, with great copiouſneſs he has great delicacy. "To ſay all at once, the *Attick* wit, of which the an- "cients made ſuch boaſt, appears more in *Ariſto-* "*phanes* than in any other that I know of in anti- "quity. But what is moſt of all to be admired in "him is, that he is always ſo much maſter of the "ſubject before him, that, without doing any vio- "lence to himſelf, he finds a way to introduce na- "turally things which at firſt appeared moſt diſtant "from his purpoſe; and even the moſt quick and "unexpected of his deſultory ſallies appear the ne- "ceſſary conſequence of the foregoing incidents. This "is that art which ſets the dialogues of *Plato* above "imitation, which we muſt conſider as ſo many dra- "matick pieces, which are equally entertaining by the "action and by the dialogue. The ſtyle of *Ariſto-* "*phanes* is no leſs pleaſing than his fancy; for, be- "ſides its clearneſs, its vigour and its ſweetneſs, there "is in it a certain harmony ſo delightful to the ear, "that there is no pleaſure equal to that of reading "it. When he applies himſelf to vulgar mediocrity "of ſtyle, he deſcends without meanneſs; when he

* Preface to *Plautus*. *Paris*, 1684.

"attempts

" attempts the ſublime, he is elevated without ob-
" ſcurity; and no man has ever had the art of blend-
" ing all the different kinds of writing ſo equally to-
" gether. After having ſtudied all that is left us of
" *Grecian* learning, if we have not read *Ariſtophanes*,
" we cannot yet know all the charms and beauties of
" that language."

Plutarch's ſentiment upon *Ariſtophanes* and *Menander*.

IX. This is a pompous elogium: but let us ſuſpend our opinion, and hear that of *Plutarch*, who, being an ancient, well deſerves our attention, at leaſt after we have heard the moderns before him. This is then the ſum of his judgment concerning *Ariſtophanes* and *Menander*. To *Menander* he gives the preference, without allowing much competition. He objects to *Ariſtophanes*, that he carries all his thoughts beyond nature, that he writes rather to the crowd than to men of character; that he affects a ſtyle obſcure and licentious; tragical, pompous, and mean, ſometimes ſerious, and ſometimes ludicrous, even to puerility; that he makes none of his perſonages ſpeak according to any diſtinct character, ſo that in his ſcenes the ſon cannot be known from the father, the citizen from the boor, the hero from the ſhop-keeper, or the divine from the ſerving-man. Whereas the diction of *Menander*, which is always uniform and pure, is very juſtly adapted to different characters, riſing when it is neceſſary to vigorous and ſprightly comedy, yet without tranſgreſſing the proper limits, or loſing ſight of nature, in which *Menander*, ſays *Plutarch*, has attained a perfection to which no other writer has arrived. For, what man beſides himſelf has ever found the art of making a diction equally ſuitable to women and children, to old and young, to divinities and heroes? Now

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Menander has found this happy ſecret, in the equality and flexibility of his diction, which, though always the ſame, is nevertheleſs different upon different occaſions; like a current of clear water (to keep cloſely to the thoughts of *Plutarch*), which running through banks differently turned, complies with all their turns backward and forward, without changing any thing of its nature or its purity. *Plutarch* mentions it as a part of the merit of *Menander*, that he began very young, and was ſtopped only by old age, at a time when he would have produced the greateſt wonders, if death had not prevented him. This, joined to a reflection, which he makes as he returns to *Ariſtophanes*, ſhows that *Ariſtophanes* continued a long time to diſplay his powers: for his poetry, ſays *Plutarch*, is a ſtrumpet that affects ſometimes the airs of a prude, but whoſe impudence cannot be forgiven by the people, and whoſe affected modeſty is deſpiſed by men of decency. *Menander*, on the contrary, always ſhows himſelf a man agreeable and witty, a companion deſirable upon the ſtage, at table, and in gay aſſemblies; an extract of all the treaſures of *Greece*, who deſerves always to be read, and always to pleaſe. His irreſiſtible power of perſuaſion, and the reputation which he has had, of being the beſt maſter of language of *Greece*, ſufficiently ſhows the delightfulneſs of his ſtyle. Upon this article of *Menander*, *Plutarch* does not know how to make an end: he ſays, that he is the delight of philoſophers fatigued with ſtudy; that they uſe his works as a meadow enamelled with flowers, where a purer air gratifies the ſenſe; that notwithſtanding the powers of the other comick poets of *Athens*, *Menander* has always been conſidered as poſſeſſing a ſalt peculiar to himſelf, drawn from the ſame waters that gave birth

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to *Venus*. That, on the contrary, the ſalt of *Ariſtophanes* is bitter, keen, coarſe, and corroſive; that one cannot tell whether his dexterity, which has been ſo much boaſted, conſiſts not more in the characters than in the expreſſion, for he is charged with playing often upon words, with affecting antithetical alluſions; that he has ſpoiled the copies which he endeavoured to take after nature; that artifice in his plays is wickedneſs, and ſimplicity, brutiſhneſs; that his jocularity ought to raiſe hiſſes rather than laughter; that his amours have more impudence than gaiety; and that he has not ſo much written for men of underſtanding, as for minds blackened with envy and corrupted with debauchery.

The juſtification of *Ariſtophanes*.

X. After ſuch a character there ſeems no need of going further; and one would think that it would be better to bury for ever the memory of ſo hateful a writer, that makes us ſo poor a recompenſe for the loſs of *Menander*, who cannot be recalled. But, without ſhowing any mercy to the indecent or malicious ſallies of *Ariſtophanes*, any more than to *Plautus* his imitator, or at leaſt the inheritor of his genius, may it not be allowed us to do, with reſpect to him, what, if I miſtake not, *Lucretius** did to *Ennius*, from whoſe muddy verſes he gathered jewels? *Enni de ſtercore gemmas.*

Beſides, we muſt not believe that *Plutarch*, who lived more than four ages after *Menander*, and more than five after *Ariſtophanes*, has paſſed ſo exact a judgment upon both, but that it may be fit to reexamine it. *Plato*, the contemporary of *Ariſtophanes*, thought very differently, at leaſt of his genius; for, in his piece called

* *Brumoy* has miſtaken *Lucretius* for *Virgil*.

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The Entertainment, he gives that poet a diſtinguiſhed place, and makes him ſpeak, according to his character, with *Socrates* himſelf; from which, by the way, it is apparent, that this dialogue of *Plato* was compoſed before the time that *Ariſtophanes* wrote his *Clouds* againſt *Socrates*. *Plato* is likewiſe ſaid to have ſent a copy of *Ariſtophanes* to *Dionyſius* the tyrant, with advice to read it diligently, if he would attain a complete judgment of the ſtate of the *Athenian* republick.

Many other ſcholars have thought, that they might depart ſomewhat from the opinion of *Plutarch*. *Friſchlinus*, for example, one of the commentators upon *Ariſtophanes*, though he juſtly allows his taſte to be leſs pure than that of *Menander*, has yet undertaken his defence againſt the outrageous cenſure of the ancient critick. In the firſt place, he condemns without mercy his ribaldry and obſcenity. But this part, ſo worthy of contempt, and written only for the lower people, according to the remark of *Boivin*, bad as it is, after all is not the chief part which is left of *Ariſtophanes*. I will not ſay with *Friſchlinus*, that *Plutarch* ſeems in this to contradict himſelf, and in reality commends the poet, when he accuſes him of having adapted his language to the ſtage; by the ſtage, in this place, he meant the theatre of *Farces*, on which low mirth and buffoonry was exhibited. This plea of *Friſchlinus* is a mere cavil; and though the poet had obtained his end, which was to divert a corrupted populace, he would not have been leſs a bad man, nor leſs a deſpicable poet, notwithſtanding the excuſe of his defender. To be able in the higheſt degree to divert fools and libertines, will not make a poet: it is not, therefore, by this defence that we muſt juſtify the character of *Ariſtophanes*. The depraved

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depraved taſte of the crowd, who once drove away *Cratinus* and his company, becauſe the ſcenes had not low buffoonry enough for their taſte, will not juſtify *Ariſtophanes*, ſince *Menander* found a way of changing the taſte by giving a ſort of comedy, not indeed ſo modeſt as *Plutarch* repreſents it, but leſs licentious than before. Nor is *Ariſtophanes* better juſtified by the reaſon which he himſelf offers, when he ſays, that he exhibited debauchery upon the ſtage, not to corrupt the morals, but to mend them. The ſight of groſs faults is rather a poiſon than a remedy.

The apologiſt has forgot one reaſon, which appears to me to be eſſential to a juſt account. As far as we can judge by appearance, *Plutarch* had in his hands all the plays of *Ariſtophanes*, which were at leaſt fifty in number. In theſe he ſaw more licentiouſneſs than has come to our hands, though in the eleven that are ſtill remaining, there is much more than could be wiſhed.

Plutarch cenſures him in the ſecond place for playing upon words; and againſt this charge *Friſchlinus* defends him with leſs ſkill. It is impoſſible to exemplify this in *French*. But after all, this part is ſo little, that it deſerved not ſo ſevere a reprehenſion, eſpecially ſince amongſt thoſe ſayings, there are ſome ſo miſchievouſly malignant, that they became proverbial, at leaſt by the ſting of their malice, if not by the delicacy of their wit. One example will be ſufficient: ſpeaking of the tax-gatherers, or the exciſemen of *Athens*, he cruſhes them at once by obſerving, *non quod eſſent* ταμιαὶ *ſed* λαμιαὶ. The word *lamiæ* ſignified *walking ſpirits*, which, according to the vulgar notion,

devoured

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devoured men; this makes the ſpirit of the ſarcaſm againſt the tax-gatherers. This cannot be rendered in our language; but if any thing as good had been ſaid in *France* on the like occaſion, it would have laſted too long, and, like many other ſayings amongſt us, been too well received. The beſt is, that *Plutarch* himſelf confeſſes that it was extremely applauded.

The third charge is, a mixture of tragick and comick ſtyle. This accuſation is certainly true; *Ariſtophanes* often gets into the buſkin: but we muſt examine upon what occaſion. He does not take upon him the character of a tragick writer; but, having remarked that his trick of parody was always well received by a people who liked to laugh at that for which they had been juſt weeping, he is eternally uſing the ſame craft; and there is ſcarcely any tragedy or ſtriking paſſage known by memory by the *Athenians*, which he does not turn into merriment, by throwing over it a dreſs of ridicule and burleſque, which is done ſometimes by changing or tranſpoſing the words, and ſometimes by an unexpected application of the whole ſentence. Theſe are the ſhreds of tragedy, in which he arrays the comick muſe, to make her ſtill more comick. *Cratinus* had before done the ſame thing; and we know that he made a comedy called *Ulyſſes*, to burleſque *Homer* and his *Odyſſey*; which ſhows, that the wits and poets are, with reſpect to one another, much the ſame at all times, and that it was at *Athens* as here. I will prove this ſyſtem by facts, particularly with reſpect to the merriment of *Ariſtophanes* upon our three celebrated tragedians. This being the caſe, the mingled ſtyle of *Ariſtophanes* will, perhaps, not deſerve ſo much cenſure as *Plutarch* has vented. We

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have no need of the Travesty of *Virgil*, nor the parodies of our own time, nor of the Lutrin of *Boileau*, to show us that this medley may have its merit upon particular occasions.

The same may be said in general of his obscurity, his meannesses, and his high flights, and of all the seeming inequality of style, which puts *Plutarch* in a rage. These censures can never be just upon a poet, whose style has always been allowed to be perfectly *Attick*, and of an *Atticism* which made them extremely delightful to the lovers of the *Athenian* taste. *Plutarch*, perhaps, rather means to blame the choruses, of which the language is sometimes elevated, sometimes burlesque, always very poetical, and therefore in appearance not suitable to comedy. But the chorus, which had been borrowed from tragedy, was then all the fashion, particularly for pieces of satire, and *Aristophanes* admitted them like the other poets of the old, and perhaps of the middle comedy; whereas *Menander* suppressed them, not so much in compliance with his own judgment, as in obedience to the publick edicts. It is not, therefore, this mixture of tragick and comick that will place *Aristophanes* below *Menander*.

The fifth charge is, that he kept no distinction of character; that, for example, he makes women speak like orators, and orators like slaves: but it appears by the characters which he ridicules, that this objection falls of itself. It is sufficient to say, that a poet who painted, not imaginary characters, but real persons, men well known, citizens whom he called by their names, and showed in dresses like their own, and masks resembling their faces, whom he branded in the sight of a whole city, extremely haughty and full of derision; it

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it is ſufficient to ſay, that ſuch a poet could never be ſuppoſed to miſs his characters. The applauſe, which his licentiouſneſs produced, is too good a juſtification; beſides, if he had not ſucceeded, he expoſed himſelf to the fate of *Eupolis*, who, in a comedy called the *Drowned Man*, having imprudently pulled to pieces particular perſons, more powerful than himſelf, was laid hold of, and drowned more effectually than thoſe he had drowned upon the open ſtage.

The condemnation of the poignancy of *Ariſtophanes*, as having too much acrimony, is better founded. Such was the turn of a ſpecies of comedy, in which all licentiouſneſs was allowed: in a nation which made every thing a ſubject of laughter, in its jealouſy of immoderate liberty, and its enmity to all appearance of rule and ſuperiority; for the genius of independency naturally produces a kind of ſatire more keen than delicate, as may be eaſily obſerved in moſt of the inhabitants of iſlands. If we do not ſay with *Longinus*, that a popular government kindles eloquence, and that a lawful monarchy ſtifles it; at leaſt it is eaſy to diſcover by the event, that eloquence in different governments takes a different appearance. In republicks it is more ſprightly and violent, and in monarchies more inſinuating and ſoft. The ſame thing may be ſaid of ridicule: it follows the caſt of genius, as genius follows that of government. Thus the republican raillery, particularly of the age which we are now conſidering, muſt have been rougher than that of the age which followed it, for the ſame reaſon, that *Horace* is more delicate, and *Lucilius* more pointed. A diſh of ſatire was always a delicious treat to human malignity; but that diſh was differently ſeaſoned, as the manners were poliſhed more

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or leſs. By poliſhed manners I mean that good-breeding, that art of reſerve and ſelf-reſtraint, which is the conſequence of dependence. If one was to determine the preference due to one of thoſe kinds of pleaſantry, of which both have their value, there would not need a moment's heſitation, every voice would join in favour of the ſofter, yet without contempt of that which is rough. *Menander* will, therefore, be preferred, but *Ariſtophanes* will not be deſpiſed, eſpecially ſince he was the firſt who quitted that wild practice of ſatiriſing at liberty right or wrong, and by a comedy of another caſt made way for the manner of *Menander*, more agreable yet, and leſs dangerous. There is yet another diſtinction to be made between the acrimony of the one, and the ſoftneſs of the other; the works of the one are acrimonious, and of the other ſoft, becauſe the one exhibited perſonal, and the other general characters; which leaves us ſtill at liberty to examine, if theſe different deſigns might not be executed with equal delicacy.

We ſhall know this by a view of the particulars; in this place we ſay only that the reigning taſte, or the love of ſtriking likeneſſes, might juſtify *Ariſtophanes* for having turned, as *Plutarch* ſays, art into malignity, ſimplicity into brutality, merriment into farce, and amour into impudence; if in any age a poet could be excuſed for painting publick folly and vice in their true colours.

There is a motive of intereſt at the bottom which diſpoſed *Elian*, *Plutarch*, and many others, to condemn this poet without appeal. *Socrates*, who is ſaid to have been deſtroyed by a poetical attack, at the inſtigation of two

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two wretches *, has too many friends among good men, to have pardon granted to ſo horrid a crime. This has filled them with an implacable hatred againſt *Ariſtophanes*, which is mingled with the ſpirit of philoſophy, a ſpirit, wherever it comes, more dangerous than any other. A common enemy will confeſs ſome good qualities in his adverſary; but a philoſopher, made partial by philoſophy, is never at reſt till he has totally deſtroyed him who has hurt the moſt tender part of his heart; that is, has diſturbed him in his adherence to ſome character, which, like that of *Socrates*, takes poſſeſſion of the mind. The mind is the freeſt part of man, and the moſt tender of its liberties: poſſeſſions, life, and reputation, may be in another's power, but opinion is always independent. If any man can obtain that gentle influence, by which he ingratiates himſelf with the underſtanding, and makes a ſect in a commonwealth, his followers will ſacrifice themſelves for him, and nobody will be pardoned that dares to attack him juſtly or unjuſtly, becauſe that truth, real or imaginary, which he maintained, is now become an idol. Time will do nothing for the extinction of this hatred; it will be propagated from age to age; and there is no hope that *Ariſtophanes* will ever be treated with tenderneſs by the diſciples of *Plato*, who made *Socrates* his hero. Every body elſe may, perhaps, confeſs, that *Ariſtophanes*, though in one inſtance a bad man, may nevertheleſs be a good poet; but diſtinctions, like theſe, will not

* It is not certain, that *Ariſtophanes* did procure the death of *Socrates*: but, however, he is certainly criminal for having, in the *Clouds*, accuſed him publickly of impiety.

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be admitted by prejudice and paſſion, and one or other dictates all characters, whether good or bad.

As I add my own reaſons, ſuch as they are, for or againſt *Ariſtophanes*, to thoſe of *Friſchlinus* his defender, I muſt not omit one thing which he has forgot, and which, perhaps, without taking in the reſt, put *Plutarch* out of humour, which is that perpetual farce which goes through all the comedies of *Ariſtophanes*, like the character of *Harlequin* on the *Italian* theatre. What kind of perſonages are clouds, frogs, waſps, and birds? *Plutarch*, uſed to a comick ſtage of a very different appearance muſt have thought them ſtrange things; and yet ſtranger muſt they appear to us who have a newer kind of comedy, with which the *Greeks* were unacquainted. This is what our poet may be charged with, and what may be proved beyond refutation. This charge compriſes all the reſt, and againſt this I ſhall not pretend to juſtify him. It would be of no uſe to ſay, that *Ariſtophanes* wrote for an age that required ſhows which filled the eye, and groteſque paintings in ſatirical performances; that the crowds of ſpectators, which ſometimes neglected *Cratinus* to throng *Ariſtophanes*, obliged him more and more to comply with the ruling taſte, leſt he ſhould loſe the publick favour by pictures more delicate and leſs ſtriking; that in a ſtate, where it was conſidered as policy to lay open every thing that had the appearance of ambition, ſingularity, or knavery, comedy was become a haranguer, a reformer, and a publick counſellor, from whom the people learned to take care of their moſt valuable intereſts; and that this comedy, in the attempt to lead and to pleaſe the people, claimed a right to the ſtrongeſt touches of eloquence, and had likewiſe the power of perſonal

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painting peculiar to herſelf. All theſe reaſons, and many others, would diſappear immediately, and my mouth would be ſtopped with a ſingle word, with which every body would agree: my antagoniſt would tell me that ſuch an age was to be pitied, and paſſing on from age to age, till he came to our own, he would conclude flatly, that we are the only poſſeſſors of common ſenſe; a determination with which the *French* are too much reproached, and which overthrows all the prejudice in favour of antiquity. At the ſight of ſo many happy touches, which one cannot help admiring in *Ariſtophanes*, a man might, perhaps, be inclined to lament that ſuch a genius was thrown into an age of fools: but what age has been without them? And have not we ourſelves reaſon to fear, leſt poſterity ſhould judge of *Moliere* and his age, as we judge of *Ariſtophanes*? *Menander* altered the taſte, and was applauded in *Athens*; but it was after *Athens* was changed. *Terence* imitated him at *Rome*, and obtained the preference over *Plautus*, though *Cæſar* called him but a demi-*Menander*, becauſe he appears to want that ſpirit and vivacity which he calls the *vis comica*. We are now weary of the manner of *Menander* and *Terence*, and leave them for *Moliere*, who appears like a new ſtar in a new courſe. Who can anſwer, that in ſuch an interval of time as has paſt between theſe four writers there will not ariſe another author, or another taſte, that may bring *Moliere*, in his turn, into neglect? Without going further, our neighbours, the *Engliſh*, think he wants force and fire. Whether they are right, or no, is another queſtion; all that I mean to advance is, that we are to fix it as a concluſion, that comick authors muſt grow obſolete with the modes of life, if we admit any one age, or any one climate,

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climate, for the ſovereign rule of taſte. But let us talk with more exactneſs, and endeavour by an exact analyſis to find out what there is in comedy, whether of *Ariſtophanes* and *Plautus*, of *Menander* and *Terence*, of *Moliere* and his rivals, which is never obſolete, and muſt pleaſe all ages and all nations.

Remarkable difference between the ſtate of comedy, and other works of genius, with regard to their duration.

XI. I now ſpeak particularly of comedy; for we muſt obſerve that between that and other works of literature, eſpecially tragedy, there is an eſſential difference, which the enemies of antiquity will not underſtand, and which I ſhall endeavour palpably to ſhow.

All works ſhow the age in which they are produced; they carry its ſtamp upon them; the manners of the times are impreſſed by indelible marks. If it be allowed, that the beſt of paſt times were rude in compariſon with ours, the cauſe of the ancients is decided againſt them; and the want of politeneſs, with which their works are charged in our days, muſt be generally confeſſed. Hiſtory alone ſeems to claim exemption from this accuſation. Nobody will dare to ſay of *Herodotus* or *Thucydides*, of *Livius* or *Tacitus*, that which has been ſaid without ſcruple of *Homer* and the ancient poets. The reaſon is, that hiſtory takes the neareſt way to its purpoſe, and gives the characters and practices of nations, be they what they will; it has no dependence upon its ſubject, and offers nothing to examination, but the art of the narrative. An hiſtory of *China* well written, would pleaſe a *Frenchman* as well as one of *France*. It is otherwiſe with mere works of genius, they depend upon their ſubjects, and conſequently upon the characters and the practices of the times in which

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they were written; this at leaſt is the light in which they are beheld. This rule of judgment is not equitable; for, as I have ſaid over and over, all the orators and the poets are painters, and merely painters. They exhibit nature as it is before them, influenced by the accidents of education, which, without changing it intirely, yet give it, in different ages and climates, a different appearance; but we make their ſucceſs depend in a great degree upon their ſubject, that is, upon circumſtances which we meaſure by the circumſtances of our own days. According to this prejudice, oratory depends more upon its ſubject than hiſtory, and poetry yet more than oratory. Our times, therefore, ſhow more regard to *Herodotus* and *Suetonius*, than to *Demoſthenes* and *Cicero*, and more to all theſe than to *Homer* or *Virgil*. Of this prejudice, there are regular gradations; and to come back to the point which we have left, we ſhow, for the ſame imperceptible reaſon, leſs regard to tragick poets than to others. The reaſon is, that the ſubjects of their paintings are more examined than the art. Thus comparing the *Achilles* and *Hippolytus* of *Euripides*, with thoſe of *Racine*, we drive them off the ſtage, without conſidering that *Racine*'s heroes will be driven off, in a future age, if the ſame rule of judgment be followed, and one time be meaſured by another.

Yet tragedy having the paſſions for its object, is not wholly expoſed to the caprice of our taſte, which would make our own manners the rule of human kind; for the paſſions of *Grecian* heroes are often dreſſed in external modes of appearance that diſguſt us, yet they break through the veil when they are ſtrongly marked, as we cannot deny them to be in *Eſchylus*, *Sophocles*,

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and *Euripides*. The eſſence then gets the better of the circumſtance. The paſſions of *Greece* and *France* do not ſo much differ by the particular characters of particular ages, as they agree by the participation of that which belongs to the ſame paſſion in all ages. Our three tragick poets will, therefore, get clear by ſuffering only a little ridicule, which falls directly upon their times; but theſe times and themſelves will be well recompenſed by the admiration which their art will irreſiſtibly enforce.

Comedy is in a more lamentable ſituation; for, not only its object is the ridiculous, which, though in reality always the ſame, is ſo dependant on cuſtom as to change its appearance with time, and with place; but the art of a comick writer is, to lay hold of that ſpecies of the ridiculous which will catch the ſpectators of the preſent hour, without regard to futurity. But, though comedy has attained its end, and diverted the pit, for which it was written; if it goes down to poſterity, it is in a new world, where it is no longer known; it becomes there quite a foreigner, becauſe there are no longer the ſame originals, nor the ſame ſpecies of the ridiculous, nor the ſame ſpectators, but a ſet of mercileſs readers, who complain that they are tired with it, though it once filled *Athens*, *Rome*, or *Paris*, with merriment. This poſition is general, and compriſes all poets and all ages. To ſay all at once, comedy is the ſlave of its ſubject, and of the reigning taſte; tragedy is not ſubject to the ſame degree of ſlavery, becauſe the ends of the two ſpecies of poetry are different. For this reaſon, if we ſuppoſe that in all ages there are criticks who meaſure every thing by the ſame rule, it will follow, that if the comedy of *Ariſtophanes* be become obſolete, that of *Menander*

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likewiſe, after having delighted *Athens*, and revived again at *Rome*, at laſt ſuffered by the force of time. The Muſe of *Moliere* has almoſt made both of them fogotten, and would ſtill be walking the ſtage, if the deſire of novelty did not in time make us weary of that which we have too frequently admired.

Thoſe who have endeavoured to render their judgment independant upon manners and cuſtoms, and of ſuch men there have been always ſome, have not judged ſo ſeverely either of times, or of writers; they have diſcovered that a certain reſemblance runs through all poliſhed ages, which are alike in eſſential things, and differ only in external manners, which, if we except religion, are things of indifference; that wherever there is genius, politeneſs, liberty, or plenty, there prevails an exact and delicate taſte, which, however hard to be expreſſed, is felt by thoſe that were born to feel it; that *Athens*, the inventreſs of all the arts, the mother firſt of the *Roman* and then of general taſte, did not conſiſt of ſtupid ſavages; that the *Athenian* and *Auguſtan* ages having always been conſidered as times that enjoyed a particular privilege of excellence, though we may diſtinguiſh the good authors from the bad, as in our own days, yet we ought to ſuſpend the vehemence of criticiſm, and proceed with caution and timidity before we paſs ſentence upon times and writers, whoſe good taſte has been univerſally applauded. This obvious conſideration has diſpoſed them to pauſe; they have endeavoured to diſcover the original of taſte, and have found that there is not only a ſtable and immutable beauty, as there is a common underſtanding in all times and places, which is never obſolete; but there is another kind of beauty, ſuch as we are now treating, which depends upon

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upon times and places, and is therefore changeable. Such is the imperfection of every thing below, that one mode of beauty is never found without a mixture of the other, and from theſe two blended together reſults what is called the taſte of an age. I am now ſpeaking of an age ſprightly and polite, an age which leaves works for a long time behind it, an age which is imitated or criticiſed when revolutions have thrown it out of ſight.

Upon this inconteſtable principle, which ſuppoſes a beauty univerſal and abſolute, and a beauty likewiſe relative and particular, which are mingled through one work in very different proportions, it is eaſy to give an account of the contrary judgments paſſed on *Ariſtophanes*. If we conſider him only with reſpect to the beauties, which, though they do not pleaſe us, delighted the *Athenians*, we ſhall condemn him at once, though even this ſort of beauty may ſometimes have its original in univerſal beauty carried to extravagance. Inſtead of commending him for being able to give merriment to the moſt refined nation of thoſe days, we ſhall proceed to place that people, with all their atticiſm, in the rank of ſavages whom we take upon us to degrade becauſe they have no other qualifications but innocence and plain underſtanding. But have not we likewiſe amidſt our more poliſhed manners, beauties merely faſhionable, which make part of our writings as of the writings of former times; beauties of which our ſelf-love now makes us fond, but which, perhaps, will diſguſt our grandſons? Let us be more equitable, let us leave this relative beauty to its real value more or leſs in every age: or, if we muſt paſs judgment upon it, let us ſay that theſe touches in *Ariſtophanes*, *Menander*, and

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Moliere, were well ſtruck off in their own time; but, that comparing them with true beauty, that part of *Ariſtophanes* was a colouring too ſtrong, that of *Menander* was too weak, and that of *Moliere* was a peculiar varniſh formed of one and the other, which, without being an imitation, is itſelf inimitable, yet depending upon time, which will efface it by degrees, as our notions, which are every day changing, ſhall receive a ſenſible alteration. Much of this has already happened ſince the time of *Moliere*, who, if he was now to come again, muſt take a new road.

With reſpect to unalterable beauties, of which comedy admits much fewer than tragedy, when they are the ſubject of our conſideration, we muſt not too eaſily ſet *Ariſtophanes* and *Plautus* below *Menander* and *Terence*. We may properly heſitate with *Boileau*, whether we ſhall prefer the *French* comedy to the *Greek* and *Latin*. Let us only give, like him, the great rule for pleaſing in all ages, and the key by which all the difficulties in paſſing judgment may be opened. This rule and this key are nothing elſe but the ultimate deſign of the comedy.

Etudiez la cour, & connoiſſez la ville:
L'une & l'autre eſt toujours en modéles fertile.
C'eſt par-là que Moliere illuſtrant ſes écrits,
Peut-être de ſon art eût remporté le prix,
Si moins ami du peuple en ſes doctes peintures
Il n'eût pont fait ſouvent grimacer ſes figures,
Quitté pour le bouffon l'agréable & le fin,
*Et ſans honte à Terence allié Tabarin**.

* *Boileau Art. Poet. chant.* 3.

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In truth, *Ariſtophanes* and *Plautus* united buffoonery and delicacy in a greater degree than *Moliere*; and for this they may be blamed. That which then pleaſed at *Athens*, and at *Rome*, was a tranſitory beauty, which had not ſufficient foundation in truth, and therefore the taſte changed. But, if we condemn thoſe ages for this, what age ſhall we ſpare? Let us refer every thing to permanent and univerſal taſte, and we ſhall find in *Ariſtophanes* at leaſt as much to commend as cenſure.

Tragedy more uniform than comedy.

XII. But before we go on to his works it may be allowed to make ſome reflections upon tragedy and comedy. Tragedy, though different according to the difference of times and writers, is uniform in its nature, being founded upon the paſſions, which never change. With comedy it is otherwiſe. Whatever difference there is between *Eſchylus*, *Sophocles*, and *Euripides*; between *Corneille* and *Racine*; between the *French* and the *Greeks*, it will not be found ſufficient to conſtitute more than one ſpecies of tragedy.

The works of thoſe great maſters are, in ſome reſpects, like the ſea-nymphs, of whom *Ovid* ſays, "That "their faces were not the ſame, yet ſo much alike that "they might be known to be ſiſters."

Facies non omnibus una,
Nec diverſa tamen, qualem decet eſſe ſororum.

The reaſon is, that the ſame paſſions give action and animation to them all. With reſpect to the comedies of *Ariſtophanes* and *Plautus*, *Menander* and *Terence*, *Moliere*

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Moliere and his imitators, if we compare them one with another, we ſhall find ſomething of a family likeneſs, but much leſs ſtrongly marked, on account of the different appearance which ridicule and pleaſantry take from the different manners of every age. They will not paſs for ſiſters, but for very diſtant relations. The Muſe of *Ariſtophanes* and *Plautus*, to ſpeak of her with juſtice, is a bacchanal at leaſt, whoſe malignant tongue is dipped in gall, or in poiſon dangerous as that of the aſpic or viper; but whoſe burſts of malice, and ſallies of wit, often give a blow where it is not expected. The Muſe of *Terence*, and conſequently of *Menander*, is an artleſs and unpainted beauty, of eaſy gaiety, whoſe features are rather delicate than ſtriking, rather ſoft than ſtrong, rather plain and modeſt than great and haughty, but always perfectly natural.

Ce n'eſt pas un portrait, une image ſemblable:
C'eſt un fils, un amant, un pre véritable.

The Muſe of *Moliere* is not always plainly dreſſed, but takes airs of quality, and riſes above her original condition, ſo as to attire herſelf gracefully in magnificent apparel. In her manners ſhe mingles elegance with foolery, force with delicacy, and grandeur, or even haughtineſs, with plainneſs and modeſty. If ſometimes, to pleaſe the people, ſhe gives a looſe to farce, it is only the gay folly of a moment, from which ſhe immediately returns, and which laſts no longer than a ſlight intoxication. The firſt might be painted encircled with little ſatyrs, ſome groſsly fooliſh, the others delicate, but all

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extremely licentious and malignant; monkeys always ready to laugh in your face, and to point out to indiſcriminate ridicule, the good and the bad. The ſecond may be ſhown encircled with genuſes full of ſoftneſs and of candour, taught to pleaſe by nature alone, and whoſe honeyed dialect is ſo much the more inſinuating, as there is no temptation to diſtruſt it. The laſt muſt be accompanied with the delicate laughter of the court, and that of the city ſomewhat more coarſe, and neither the one nor the other can be ſeparated from her. The Muſe of *Ariſtophanes* and of *Plautus* can never be denied the honour of ſprightlineſs, animation, and invention; nor that of *Menander* and *Terence* the praiſe of nature and of delicacy; to that of *Moliere* muſt be allowed the happy ſecret of uniting all the piquancy of the former, with a peculiar art which they did not know. Of theſe three ſorts of merit, let us ſhow to each the juſtice that is due, let us in each ſeparate the pure and the true from the falſe gold, without approving or condemning either the one or the other in the groſs. If we muſt pronounce in general upon the taſte of their writings, we muſt indiſputably allow that *Menander*, *Terence*, and *Moliere*, will give moſt pleaſure to a decent audience, and conſequently that they approach nearer to the true beauty, and have leſs mixture of beauties purely relative, than *Plautus* and *Ariſtophanes*.

If we diſtinguiſh comedy by its ſubjects, we ſhall find three ſorts among the *Greeks*, and as many among the *Latins*, all differently dreſſed: if we diſtinguiſh it by ages and authors, we ſhall again find three ſorts; and we ſhall find three ſorts a third time if we regard more cloſely

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closely the subject. As the ultimate and general rules of all those sorts of comedy are the same, it will, perhaps, be agreeable to our purpose to sketch them out before we give a full display of the last class. I can do nothing better on this occasion than transcribe the twenty-fifth reflection of *Rapin* upon poetry in particular.

General rules of comedy.

XIII. "Comedy, says he *, is a representation of common life: its end "is to show the faults of particular characters on the "stage, to correct the disorder of the people by the "fear of ridicule. Thus ridicule is the essential part "of a comedy. Ridicule may be in words, or in things; "it may be decent, or grotesque. To find what is "ridiculous in every thing, is the gift merely of nature; "for all the actions of life have their bright and their "dark sides; something serious, and something merry. "But *Aristotle*, who has given rules for drawing tears, "has given none for raising laughter; for this is merely "the work of nature, and must proceed from genius, "with very little help from art or matter. The *Spaniards* "have a turn to find the ridicule in things much more "than we: and the *Italians*, who are natural comedians, "have a better turn for expressing it; their language "is more proper for it than ours, by an air of drollery "which it can put on, and of which ours may become "capable when it shall be brought nearer to perfection. "In short, that agreeable turn, that gaiety which yet "maintains the delicacy of its character without falling "into dulness or into buffoonery, that elegant raillery

* *Reflexions sur la Poët.* p. 154. *Paris*, 1684.

"which

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"which is the flower of fine wit, is the qualification "which comedy requires. We muſt, however, re- "member that the true artificial ridicule, which is re- "quired on the theatre, muſt be only a tranſcript of "the ridicule which nature affords. Comedy is na- "turally written, when, being on the theatre, a man can "fancy himſelf in a private family, or a particular "part of the town, and meets with nothing but what "he really meets with in the world; for it is no real "comedy in which a man does not ſee his own picture, "and find his own manners and thoſe of the people "among whom he lives. *Menander* ſucceeded only by "this art among the *Greeks:* and the *Romans*, when "they ſat at *Terence*'s comedies, imagined themſelves "in a private party; for they found nothing there "which they had not been uſed to find in common "company. The great art of comedy is to adhere to "nature without deviation; to have general ſentiments "and expreſſions which all the world can underſtand: "for the writer muſt keep it always in his mind, that "the coarſeſt touches after nature will pleaſe more than "the moſt delicate with which nature is inconſiſtent. "However, low and mean words ſhould never be al- "lowed upon the ſtage, if they are not ſupported with "ſome kind of wit. Proverbs and vulgar ſmartneſſes "can never be ſuffered, unleſs they have ſomething in "them of nature and pleaſantry. This is the univerſal "principle of comedy; whatever is repreſented in this "manner muſt pleaſe, and nothing can ever pleaſe with- "out it. It is by application to the ſtudy of nature "alone that we arrive at probability, which is the only "infallible guide to theatrical ſucceſs: without this pro- "bability every thing is defective, and that which has

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" it, is beautiful: he that follows this, can never go " wrong; and the moſt common faults of comedy pro- " ceed from the neglect of propriety, and the precipi- " tation of incidents. Care muſt likewiſe be taken that " the hints, made uſe of to introduce the incidents, are " not too ſtrong, that the ſpectator may enjoy the plea- " ſure of finding out their meaning: but commonly the " weak place in our comedy is the untying of the plot, " in which we almoſt always fail, on account of the dif- " ficulty which there is in diſentangling of what has " been perplexed. To perplex an intrigue is eaſy, the " imagination does it by itſelf; but it muſt be diſentan- " gled merely by the judgment, and is, therefore, ſeldom " done happily: and he that reflects a very little, will " find that moſt comedies are faulty by an unnatural " cataſtrophe. It remains to be examined whether " comedy will allow pictures larger than the life, that " this ſtrength of the ſtrokes may make a deeper im- " preſſion upon the mind of the ſpectators; that is, if " a poet may make a covetous man more covetous, " and a peeviſh man more impertinent and more " troubleſome than he really is. To which I anſwer, " that this was the practice of *Plautus*, whoſe aim was " to pleaſe the people; but that *Terence* who wrote for " gentlemen, confined himſelf within the compaſs of " nature, and repreſented vice without addition or ag- " gravation. However, theſe extravagant characters, " ſuch as the *Citizen turned Gentleman*, and the *Hypo- " chondriac Patient* of *Moliere*, have lately ſucceeded at " court, where delicacy is carried ſo far; but every thing, " even to provincial interludes, is well received if it has " but merriment, for we had rather laugh than admire. " Theſe are the moſt important rules of comedy."

XIV. Theſe

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XIV. Theſe rules, indeed, are common to the three kinds which I have in my mind; but it is neceſſary to diſtinguiſh each from the reſt, which may be done by diverſity of matter, which always makes ſome diverſity of management. The old and middle comedy ſimply repreſented real adventures: in the ſame way ſome paſſages of hiſtory and of fable might form a claſs of comedies, which ſhould reſemble it without having its faults; ſuch is the *Amphitryon*. How many moral tales, how many adventures ancient and modern, how many little fables of *Æſop*, of *Phædrus*, of *Fontaine*, or ſome other ancient poet, would make pretty exhibitions, if they were all made uſe of as materials by ſkilful hands? And have we not ſeen ſome like *Timon the Man Hater*, that have been ſucceſsful in this way? This ſort chiefly regards the *Italians*. The ancient exhibition called a ſatyre, becauſe the ſatyrs played their part in it, of which we have no other inſtance than the *Cyclops* of *Euripides*, has, without doubt, given occaſion to the paſtoral comedies, for which we are chiefly indebted to *Italy*, and which are there more cultivated than in *France*. It is, however, a kind of exhibition that would have its charms, if it was touched with elegance and without meanneſs; it is the paſtoral put into action. To conclude, the new comedy, invented by *Menander*, has produced the comedy properly ſo called in our times. This is that which has for its ſubject general pictures of common life, and feigned names and adventures, whether of the court or of the city. This third kind is inconteſtably the moſt noble, and has received the ſtrongeſt ſanction from cuſtom. It is likewiſe the moſt difficult to perform, becauſe it is merely the work of invention, in which the poet

Three ſorts of comedy.

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poet has no help from real paſſages, or perſons, which the tragick poet always makes uſe of. Who knows but by deep thinking, another kind of comedy may be invented wholly different from the three which I have mentioned; ſuch is the fruitfulneſs of comedy: but its courſe is already too wide for the diſcovery of new fields to be wiſhed, and on ground where we are already ſo apt to ſtumble, nothing is ſo dangerous as novelty imperfectly underſtood. This is the rock on which men have often ſplit in every kind of purſuit; to go no further, in that of grammar and language: it is better to endeavour after novelty in the manner of expreſſing common things, than to hunt for ideas out of the way, in which many a man loſes himſelf. The ill ſucceſs of that odd compoſition *Tragick Comedy*, a monſter wholly unknown to antiquity, ſufficiently ſhows the danger of novelty in attempts like theſe.

Whether tragedy or comedy be the harder to write.

XV. To finiſh the parallel of the two dramas, a queſtion may be revived equally common and important, which has been oftener propoſed than well decided: it is whether comedy or tragedy be moſt eaſy or difficult to be well executed. I ſhall not have the temerity to determine poſitively a queſtion which ſo many great geniuſes have been afraid to decide: but if it be allowed to every literary man to give his reaſon for and againſt a mere work of genius, conſidered without reſpect to its good or bad tendency, I ſhall in a few words give my opinion, drawn from the nature of the two works, and the qualifications they demand. *Horace* * propoſes a queſtion nearly of the ſame kind: "It has been enquired, "whether a good poem be the work of art or nature:

* Poet. v. 407.

"for

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"for my part, I do not ſee much to be done by art "without genius, nor by genius without knowledge. "The one is neceſſary to the other, and the ſucceſs de- "pends upon their cooperation." If we ſhould endeavour to accommodate matters in imitation of this deciſion of *Horace*, it were eaſy to ſay at once, that ſuppoſing two geniuſes equal, one tragick and the other comick, ſuppoſing the art likewiſe equal in each, one would be as eaſy or difficult as the other; but this, though ſatisfactory in the ſimple queſtion put by *Horace*, will not be ſufficient here. Nobody can doubt but genius and induſtry contribute their part to every thing valuable, and particularly to good poetry. But if genius and ſtudy were to be weighed one againſt the other, in order to diſcover which muſt contribute moſt to a good work, the queſtion would become more curious, and, perhaps, very difficult of ſolution. Indeed, though nature muſt have a great part of the expenſe of poetry, yet no poetry laſts long that is not very correct: the balance, therefore, ſeems to incline in favour of correction. For is it not known that *Virgil* with leſs genius than *Ovid*, is yet valued more by men of exquiſite judgment; or, without going ſo far, *Boileau*, the *Horace* of our time, who compoſed with ſo much labour, and aſked *Moliere* where he found his rhyme ſo eaſily, has ſaid, "If I write four words, I ſhall blot out three;" has not *Boileau*, by his poliſhed lines, retouched and retouched a thouſand times, gained the preference above the works of the ſame *Moliere*, which are ſo natural, and produced by ſo fruitful a genius! *Horace* was of that opinion, for when he is teaching the writers of his age the art of poetry, he tells them in plain terms, that

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Rome would excel in writing as in arms, if the poets were not afraid of the labour, patience, and time required to poliſh their pieces. He thought every poem was bad that had not been brought ten times back to the anvil, and required that a work ſhould be kept nine years, as a child is nine months in the womb of its mother, to reſtrain that natural impatience which combine with ſloth and ſelf-love to diſguiſe faults; ſo certain is it that correction is the touchſtone of writing.

The queſtion propoſed comes back to the compariſon which I have been making between genius and correction, ſince we are now engaged in enquiring whether there is more or leſs difficulty in writing tragedy or comedy: for as we muſt compare nature and ſtudy one with another, ſince they muſt both concur more or leſs to make a poet; ſo if we will compare the labours of two different minds in different kinds of writing, we muſt, with regard to the authors, compare the force of genius, and with reſpect to the compoſition, the difficulties of the taſk.

The genius of the tragick and comick writer will be eaſily allowed to be remote from each other. Every performance, be what it will, requires a turn of mind which a man cannot confer upon himſelf: it is purely the gift of nature, which determines thoſe who have it, to purſue, almoſt in ſpite of themſelves, the taſte which predominates in their minds. *Paſcal* found in his childhood, that he was a mathematician, and *Vandyke* that he was born a painter. Sometimes this internal direction of the mind does not make ſuch evident diſcoveries of itſelf; but it is rare to find *Corneilles* who have lived long without knowing that they were

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were poets. *Corneille* having once got ſome notion of his powers, tried a long time on all ſides to know what particular direction he ſhould take. He had firſt made an attempt in comedy, in an age when it was yet ſo groſs in *France* that it could give no pleaſure to polite perſons. *Melite* was ſo well received when he dreſſed her out, that ſhe gave riſe to a new ſpecies of comedy and comedians. This ſucceſs, which encouraged *Corneille* to purſue that ſort of comedy of which he was the firſt inventor, left him no reaſon to imagine, that he was one day to produce thoſe maſter-pieces of tragedy, which his muſe diſplayed afterwards with ſo much ſplendour; and yet leſs did he imagine, that his comick pieces, which, for want of any that were preferable, were then very much in faſhion, would be eclipſed by another genius * formed upon the *Greeks* and *Romans*, and who would add to their excellencies improvements of his own, and that this modiſh comedy, to which *Corneille*, as to his idol, dedicated his labours, would quickly be forgot. He wrote firſt *Medea*, and afterwards the *Cid*, and, by that prodigious flight of his genius, he diſcovered, though late, that nature had formed him to run in no other courſe but that of *Sophocles*. Happy genius! that, without rule or imitation, could at once take ſo high a flight; having once, as I may ſay, made himſelf an eagle, he never afterwards quitted the path, which he had worked out for himſelf, over the heads of the writers of his time: yet he retained ſome traces of the falſe taſte which infected the whole nation; but even in this, he deſerves our

* *Moliere.*

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admiration, ſince in time he changed it completely by the reflections he made, and thoſe he occaſioned. In ſhort, *Corneille* was born for tragedy, as *Moliere* for comedy. *Moliere*, indeed, knew his own genius ſooner, and was not leſs happy in procuring applauſe, though it often happened to him as to *Corneille*,

L'Ignorance & l'Erreur à ſes naiſſantes pièces
En habit de Marquis, en robes de Comteſſes,
Vinſſent pour diffamer ſon chef-d'œuvre nouveau,
Et ſecoüer la tête à l'endroit le plus beau.

But, without taking any farther notice of the time at which either came to the knowledge of his own genius, let us ſuppoſe that the powers of tragedy and comedy were as equally ſhared between *Moliere* and *Corneille*, as they are different in their own nature, and then nothing more will remain than to compare the ſeveral difficulties of each compoſition, and to rate thoſe difficulties together which are common to both.

It appears, firſt, that the tragick poet has in his ſubject an advantage over the comick, for he takes it from hiſtory; and his rival, at leaſt in the more elevated and ſplendid comedy, is obliged to form it by his own invention. Now, it is not ſo eaſy as it might ſeem to find comick ſubjects capable of a new and pleaſing form; but hiſtory is a ſource, if not inexhauſtible, yet certainly ſo copious as never to leave the genius aground. It is true, that invention ſeems to have a wider field than hiſtory: real facts are limited in their number, but the facts which may be feigned

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feigned have no end; but though, in this reſpect, invention may be allowed to have the advantage, is the difficulty of inventing to be accounted as nothing? To make a tragedy is to get materials together, and to make uſe of them like a ſkilful architect; but to make a comedy, is to build like *Æſop* in the air. It is in vain to boaſt that the compaſs of invention is as wide as the extent of deſire; every thing is limited, and the mind of man like every thing elſe. Beſides, invention muſt be in conformity to nature; but diſtinct and remarkable characters are very rare in nature herſelf. *Moliere* has got hold on the principal touches of ridicule. If any man ſhould bring characters leſs ſtrong, he will be in danger of dulneſs. Where comedy is to be kept up by ſubordinate perſonages, it is in great danger. All the force of a picture muſt ariſe from the principal perſons, and not from the multitude cluſtered up together. In the ſame manner, a comedy, to be good, muſt be ſupported by a ſingle ſtriking character, and not by under-parts.

But, on the contrary, tragick characters are without number, though of them the general outlines are limited; but diſſimulation, jealouſy, policy, ambition, deſire of dominion, and other intereſts and paſſions, are various without end, and take a thouſand different forms in different ſituations of hiſtory; ſo that as long as there is tragedy, there may be always novelty. Thus the jealous and diſſembling *Mithridates*, ſo happily painted by *Racine*, will not ſtand in the way of a poet who ſhall attempt a jealous and diſſembling *Tiberius*. The ſtormy violence of an *Achilles* will always leave room for the ſtormy violence of *Alexander*.

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But the caſe is very different with avarice, trifling vanity, hypocriſy, and other vices, conſidered as ridiculous. It would be ſafer to double and treble all the tragedies of our greateſt poets, and uſe all their ſubjects over and over, as has been done with *Oedipus* and *Sophoniſba*, than to bring again upon the ſtage in five acts a *Miſer*, a *Citizen turned Gentleman*, a *Tartuffe*, and other ſubjects ſufficiently known. Not that theſe popular vices are leſs capable of diverſification, or are leſs varied by different circumſtances, than the vices and paſſions of heroes; but that if they were to be brought over again in comedies, they would be leſs diſtinct, leſs exact, leſs forcible, and, conſequently, leſs applauded. Pleaſantry and ridicule muſt be more ſtrongly marked than heroiſm and pathos, which ſupport themſelves by their own force. Beſides, though theſe two things of ſo different natures could ſupport themſelves equally in equal variety, which is very far from being the caſe; yet comedy, as it now ſtands, conſiſts not in incidents, but in characters. Now it is by incidents only that characters are diverſified, as well upon the ſtage of comedy, as upon the ſtage of life. Comedy, as *Moliere* has left it, reſembles the pictures of manners drawn by the celebrated *La Bruyere*. Would any man after him venture to draw them over again, he would expoſe himſelf to the fate of thoſe who have ventured to continue them. For inſtance, what could we add to his character of the *Abſent Man?* Shall we put him in other circumſtances? The principal ſtrokes of abſence of mind will always be the ſame; and there are only thoſe ſtriking touches which are fit for a comedy, of which the end is painting after nature, but with

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with ſtrength and ſprightlineſs like the deſigns of *Callot*. If comedy were among us what it is in *Spain*, a kind of romance, conſiſting of many circumſtances and intrigues, perplexed and diſentangled, ſo as to ſurpriſe; if it was nearly the ſame with that which *Corneille* practiſed in his time; if, like that of *Terence*, it went no farther than to draw the common portraits of ſimple nature, and ſhow us fathers, ſons, and rivals; notwithſtanding the uniformity, which would always prevail as in the plays of *Terence*, and probably in thoſe of *Menander*, whom he imitated in his four firſt pieces, there would always be a reſource found either in variety of incidents, like thoſe of the *Spaniards*, or in the repetition of the ſame characters in the way of *Terence*: but the caſe is now very different, the publick calls for new characters and nothing elſe. Multiplicity of accidents, and the laborious contrivance of an intrigue, are not now allowed to ſhelter a weak genius that would find great conveniencies in that way of writing. Nor does it ſuit the taſte of comedy, which requires an air leſs conſtrained, and ſuch freedom and eaſe of manners as admits nothing of the romantick. She leaves all the pomp of ſudden events to the novels, or little romances, which were the diverſion of the laſt age. She allows nothing but a ſucceſſion of characters reſembling nature, and falling in without any apparent contrivance. *Racine* has likewiſe taught us to give to tragedy the ſame ſimplicity of air and action; he has endeavoured to diſentangle it from that great number of incidents, which made it rather a ſtudy than diverſion to the audience, and which ſhow the poet not ſo much to abound in invention, as to be deficient in

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taſte. But, notwithſtanding all that he has done, or that we can do, to make it ſimple, it will always have the advantage over comedy in the number of its ſubjects, becauſe it admits more variety of ſituations and events, which give variety and novelty to the characters. A miſer, copied after nature, will always be the miſer of *Plautus* or *Moliere*; but a *Nero*, or a prince like *Nero*, will not always be the hero of *Racine*. Comedy admits of ſo little intrigue, that the miſer cannot be ſhown in any ſuch poſition as will make his picture new; but the great events of tragedy may put *Nero* in ſuch circumſtances as to make him wholly another character.

But, in the ſecond place, over and above the ſubjects, may we not ſay ſomething concerning the final purpoſe of comedy and tragedy? The purpoſe of the one is to divert, and the other to move; and of theſe two, which is the eaſier? To go to the bottom of thoſe purpoſes; to move is to ſtrike thoſe ſtrings of the heart which is moſt natural, terror and pity: to divert is to make one laugh, a thing which indeed is natural enough, but more delicate. The gentleman and the ruſtick have both ſenſibility and tenderneſs of heart, perhaps in greater or leſs degree; but as they are men alike, the heart is moved by the ſame touches. They both love likewiſe to ſend their thoughts abroad, and to expand themſelves in merriment; but the ſprings which muſt be touched for this purpoſe, are not the ſame in the gentleman and the ruſtick. The paſſions depend on nature, and merriment upon education. The clown will laugh at a waggery, and the gentleman only at a ſtroke of delicate conceit. The ſpectators of a tragedy,

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tragedy, if they have but a little knowledge, are almoſt all on a level; but with reſpect to comedy, we have three claſſes, if not more, the people, the learned, and the court. If there are certain caſes in which all may be comprehended in the term people, this is not one of thoſe caſes. Whatever father *Rapin* may ſay about it, we are more willing even to admire than to laugh. Every man that has any power of diſtinction, laughs as rarely as the philoſopher admires; for we are not to reckon thoſe fits of laughter which are not incited by nature, and which are given merely to complaiſance, to reſpect, flattery, and good-humour; ſuch as break out at ſayings which pretend to ſmartneſs in aſſemblies. The laughter of the theatre is of another ſtamp. Every reader and ſpectator judges of wit by his own ſtandard, and meaſures it by his capacity, or by his condition: the different capacities and conditions of men make them diverted on very different occaſions. If, therefore, we conſider the end of the tragick and comick poet, the comedian muſt be involved in much more difficulties, without taking in the obſtructions to be encountered equally by both, in an art which conſiſts in raiſing the paſſions, or the mirth of a great multitude. The tragedian has little to do but to reflect upon his own thought, and draw from his heart thoſe ſentiments which will certainly make their way to the hearts of others, if he found them in his own. The other muſt take many forms, and change himſelf almoſt into as many perſons, as he undertakes to ſatisfy and divert.

It may be ſaid, that, if genius be ſuppoſed equal, and ſucceſs ſuppoſed to depend upon genius, the buſineſs

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fineſs will be equally eaſy and difficult to one author and to the other. This objection is of no weight; for the ſame queſtion ſtill recurs, which is, whether of theſe two kinds of genius is more valuable or more rare. If we proceed by example, and not by reaſoning, we ſhall decide I think in favour of comedy.

It may be ſaid, that, if merely art be conſidered, it will require deeper thoughts to form a plan juſt and ſimple; to produce happy ſurpriſes without apparent contrivance; to carry a paſſion ſkilfully through its gradations to its height; to arrive happily to the end by always moving from it, as *Ithaca* ſeemed to fly *Ulyſſes*; to unite the acts and ſcenes; and to raiſe by inſenſible degrees a ſtriking edifice, of which the leaſt merit ſhall be exactneſs of proportion. It may be added, that in comedy this art is infinitely leſs, for there the characters come upon the ſtage with very little artifice or plot: the whole ſcheme is ſo connected that we ſee it at once, and the plan and diſpoſition of the parts make a ſmall part of its excellence, in compariſon of a gloſs of pleaſantry diffuſed over each ſcene, which is more the happy effect of a lucky moment, than of long conſideration.

Theſe objections, and many others, which ſo fruitful a ſubject might eaſily ſuggeſt, it is not difficult to refute; and if we were to judge by the impreſſion made on the mind by tragedies and comedies of equal excellence, perhaps, when we examine thoſe impreſſions, it will be found that a ſally of pleaſantry, which diverts all the world, required more thought than a paſſage which gave the higheſt pleaſure in tragedy; and to this determination we ſhall be more inclined when a cloſer examination

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examination ſhall ſhow us, that a happy vein of tragedy is opened and effuſed at leſs expenſe, than a well-placed witticiſm in comedy has required merely to aſſign its place.

It would be too much to dwell long upon ſuch a digreſſion; and as I have no buſineſs to decide the queſtion, I leave both that and my arguments to the taſte of each particular reader, who will find what is to be ſaid for or againſt it. My purpoſe was only to ſay of comedy, conſidered as a work of genius, all that a man of letters can be ſuppoſed to deliver without departing from his character, and without palliating in any degree the corrupt uſe which has been almoſt always made of an exhibition which in its nature might be innocent; but has been vicious from the time that it has been infected with the wickedneſs of men. It is not for publick exhibitions that I am now writing, but for literary inquiries. The ſtage is too much frequented, and books too much neglected. Yet it is to the literature of *Greece* and *Rome* that we are indebted for that valuable taſte, which will be inſenſibly loſt by the affected negligence which now prevails of having recourſe to originals. If reaſon has been a conſiderable gainer, it muſt be confeſſed that taſte has been ſomewhat a loſer.

To return to *Ariſtophanes*. So many great men of antiquity, through a long ſucceſſion of ages, down to our times, have ſet a value upon his works, that we cannot naturally ſuppoſe them contemptible, notwithſtanding the eſſential faults with which he may be juſtly reproached. It is ſufficient to ſay, that he was eſteemed by *Plato* and *Cicero*; and to conclude by that which does

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does him moſt honour, but ſtill falls ſhort of juſtification, the ſtrong and ſprightly eloquence of St. *Chryſoſtom* drew its ſupport from the maſculine and vigorous atticiſm of this ſarcaſtic comedian, to whom the father paid the ſame regard as *Alexander* to *Homer*, that of putting his works under his pillow, that he might read them at night before he ſlept, and in the morning as ſoon as he awaked,

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GENERAL CONCLUSION

TO

BRUMOY'S GREEK THEATRE.

I. THUS I have given a faithful extract of the remains of *Ariſtophanes*. That I have not ſhown them in their true form, I am not afraid that any body will complain. I have given an account of every thing as far as it was conſiſtent with moral decency. No pen, however cynical or heatheniſh, would venture to produce in open day the horrid paſſages which I have put out of ſight; and inſtead of regretting any part that I have ſuppreſſed, the very ſuppreſſion will eaſily ſhow to what degree the *Athenians* were infected with licentiouſneſs of imagination and corruption of principles. If the taſte of antiquity allows us to preſerve what time and barbarity have hitherto ſpared, religion and virtue at leaſt oblige us not to ſpread it before the eyes of mankind. To end this work in an uſeful manner, let us examine in a few words the four particulars which are moſt ſtriking in the eleven pieces of *Ariſtophanes*.

Summary of the four articles treated of in this diſcourſe.

II. The firſt is the character of the ancient comedy, which has no likeneſs to any thing in nature. Its genius is ſo wild

Character of ancient comedy.

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wild and ſtrange, that it ſcarce admits a definition. In what claſs of comedy muſt we place it? It appears to me to be a ſpecies of writing by itſelf. If we had *Phrynicus*, *Plato*, *Eupolis*, *Critinus Ameipſias*, and ſo many other celebrated rivals of *Ariſtophanes*, of whom all that we can find are a few fragments ſcattered in *Plutarch*, *Athenias*, and *Suidas*, we might compare them with our poet, ſettle the general ſcheme, obſerve the minuter differences, and form a complete notion of their comick ſtage. But for want of all this we can fix only on *Ariſtophanes*, and it is true that he may be in ſome meaſure ſufficient to furniſh a tolerable judgment of the old comedy; for if we believe him, and who can be better credited? he was the moſt daring of all his brethren the poets, who practiſed the ſame kind of writing. Upon this ſuppoſition we may conclude, that the comedy of thoſe days conſiſted in an allegory drawn out and continued; an allegory never very regular, but often ingenious, and almoſt always carried beyond ſtrict propriety, of ſatire keen and biting, but diverſified, ſprightly and unexpected; ſo that the wound was given before it was perceived. Their points of ſatire were thunderbolts, and their wild figures, with their variety and quickneſs, had the effect of lightning. Their imitation was carried even to reſemblance of perſons, and their common entertainments was a parody of rival poets joined, if I may ſo expreſs it, with a parody of manners and habits.

But it would be tedious to draw out to the reader that which he will already have perceived better than myſelf. I have no deſign to anticipate his reflections; and therefore ſhall only ſketch the picture, which he muſt

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muſt finiſh by himſelf: he will purſue the ſubject farther, and form to himſelf a view of the common and domeſtick life of the *Athenians*, of which this kind of comedy was a picture, with ſome aggravation of the features: he will bring within his view all the cuſtoms, manners, and vices, and the whole character of the people of *Athens*. By bringing all theſe together he will fix in his mind an indelible idea of a people in whom ſo many contrarieties were united, and who in a manner that can ſcarce be expreſſed, connected nobility with the caſt of *Athens*, wiſdom with madneſs, rage for novelty with a bigotry for antiquity, the politeneſs of a monarchy with the roughneſs of a republick, refinement with coarſeneſs, independence with ſlavery, haughtineſs with ſervile compliance, ſeverity of manners with debauchery, a kind of irreligion with piety. We ſhall do this in reading; as in travelling through different nations we make ourſelves maſters of their characters by combining their different appearances, and reflecting upon what we ſee.

The government of the *Athenians*.

III. The government of *Athens* makes a fine part of the ancient comedy. In moſt ſtates the myſtery of government is confined within the walls of the cabinets; even in commonwealths it does not paſs but through five or ſix heads, who rule thoſe that think themſelves the rulers. Oratory dares not touch it, and comedy ſtill leſs. *Cicero* himſelf did not ſpeak freely upon ſo nice a ſubject as the *Roman* commonwealth; but the *Athenian* eloquence was informed of the whole ſecret, and ſearches the receſſes of the human mind, to fetch it out and expoſe it to the people. *Demoſthenes*, and his contemporaries, ſpeak

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ſpeak with a freedom at which we are aſtoniſhed, notwithſtanding the notion we have of a popular government, yet at what time but this did comedy adventure to claim the ſame rights with civil eloquence? The *Italian* comedy of the laſt age, all daring as it was, could for its boldneſs come into no competition with the ancient. It was limited to general ſatire, which was ſometimes carried ſo far, that the malignity was overlooked in an attention to the wild exaggeration, the unexpected ſtrokes, the pungent wit, and the malignity concealed under ſuch wild flights as became the character of *Harlequin*. But though it ſo far reſembled *Ariſtophanes*, our age is yet at a great diſtance from his, and the *Italian* comedy from his ſcenes. But with reſpect to the liberty of cenſuring the government, there can be no compariſon made of one age or comedy with another. *Ariſtophanes* is the only writer of his kind, and is for that reaſon of the higheſt value. A powerful ſtate ſet at the head of *Greece*, is the ſubject of his merriment, and that merriment is allowed by the ſtate itſelf. This appears to us an inconſiſtency; but it is true that it was the intereſt of the ſtate to allow it, though not always without inconveniency. It was a reſtraint upon the ambition and tyranny of ſingle men, a matter of great importance to a people ſo very jealous of their liberty. *Cleon*, *Alcibiades*, *Lamachus*, and many other generals and magiſtrates, were kept under by fear of the comick ſtrokes of a poet ſo little cautious as *Ariſtophanes*. He was once indeed in danger of paying dear for his wit. He profeſſed, as he tells us himſelf, to be of great uſe by his writings to the ſtate; and rated his merit ſo high as to complain that he was not re-

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warded. But, under pretence of this publick ſpirit, he ſpared no part of the publick conduct, neither was government, councils, revenues, popular aſſemblies, ſecret proceedings in judicature, choice of miniſters, the government of the nobles, or that of the people ſpared.

The *Acharnians*, the *Peace*, and the *Birds*, are eternal monuments of the boldneſs of the poet, who was not afraid of cenſuring the government for the obſtinate continuance of a ruinous war, for undertaking new ones, and feeding itſelf with wild imaginations, and running to deſtruction as it did for an idle point of honour.

Nothing can be more reproachful to the *Athenians* than his play of the *Knights*, where he repreſents under an allegory that may be eaſily ſeen through, the nation of the *Athenians* as an old doting fellow tricked by a new man, ſuch as *Cleon* and his companions, who were of the ſame ſtamp.

A ſingle glance upon *Lyſiſtrata*, and the *Female Orators*, muſt raiſe aſtoniſhment when the *Athenian* policy is ſet below the ſchemes of women, whom the author makes ridiculous for no other reaſon than to bring contempt upon their huſbands, who held the helm of government.

The *Waſps* is written to expoſe the madneſs of people for lawſuits and litigations, and a multitude of iniquities are laid open.

It may eaſily be gathered, that notwithſtanding the wiſe laws of *Solon*, which they ſtill profeſſed to follow, the government was falling into decay, for we are not to underſtand the jeſt of *Ariſtophanes* in the literal ſenſe. It is plain that the corruption, though we ſhould ſuppoſe it but half as much as we are told, was very great,

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for it ended in the deſtruction of *Athens*, which could ſcarce raiſe its head again, after it had been taken by *Lyſander*. Though we conſider *Ariſtophanes* as a comick writer who deals in exaggeration, and bring down his ſtories to their true ſtandard, we ſtill find that the fundamentals of their government fail in almoſt all the eſſential points. That the people were inveigled by men of ambition; that all councils and decrees had their original in factious combinations; that avarice and private intereſt animated all their policy to the hurt of the publick; that their revenues were ill managed, their allies improperly treated; that their good citizens were ſacrificed, and the bad put in places; that a mad eagerneſs for judicial litigation took up all their attention within, and that war was made without, not ſo much with wiſdom and precaution, as with temerity and good luck; that the love of novelty and faſhion in the manner of managing the publick affairs was a madneſs univerſally prevalent; and that *Melanthius* ſays in *Plutarch*, the republick of *Athens* was continued only by the perpetual diſcord of thoſe that managed its affairs. This remedied the diſhonour by preſerving the equilibrium, and was kept always in action by eloquence and comedy.

This is what in general may be drawn from the reading *Ariſtophanes*. The ſagacity of the readers will go farther: they will compare the different forms of government by which that tumultuous people endeavoured to regulate or increaſe the democracy, which forms were all fatal to the ſtate, becauſe they were not built upon laſting foundations, and had all in them the principles of deſtruction. A ſtrange contrivance it was to

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to perpetuate a ſtate by changing the juſt proportion which *Solon* had wiſely ſettled between the nobles and the people; and by opening a gate to the ſkilful ambition of thoſe who had art or courage enough to force themſelves into the government by means of the people, whom they flattered with protections that they might more certainly cruſh them.

The tragick poets rallied.

IV. Another part of the works of *Ariſtophanes* are his pleaſant reflections upon the moſt celebrated poets: the ſhafts which he lets fly at the three heroes of tragedy, and particularly at *Euripides*, might incline the reader to believe that he had little eſteem for thoſe great men; and that probably the ſpectators that applauded him were of his opinion. This concluſion would not be juſt, as I have already ſhown by arguments, which, if I had not offered them, the reader might have diſcovered better than I. But that I may leave no room for objections, and prevent any ſhadow of captiouſneſs, I ſhall venture to obſerve, that poſterity will not conſider *Racine* as leſs a maſter of the *French* ſtage becauſe his plays were ridiculed by parodies. Parody always fixes upon the beſt pieces, and was more to the taſte of the *Greeks* than to ours. At preſent the high theatres give it up to ſtages of inferior rank; but in *Athens* the comick theatre conſidered parody as its principal ornament, for a reaſon which is worth examining. The ancient comedy was not like ours, a remote and delicate imitation; it was the art of groſs mimickry, and would have been ſuppoſed to have miſſed its aim, had it not copied the mien, the walk, the dreſs, the motions of the face of thoſe whom it exhibited. Now parody is an imitation of this kind; it

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is a change of ſerious to burleſque, by a ſlight variation of words, inflection of voice, or an imperceptible art of mimickry. Parody is to poetry as a maſque to a face. As the tragedies of *Eſchylus*, of *Sophocles*, and of *Euripides*, were much in faſhion, and were known by memory to the people, the parodies upon them would naturally ſtrike and pleaſe, when they were accompanied by the grimaces of a good comedian, who mimicked with archneſs a ſerious character. Such is the malignity of human nature; we love to laugh at thoſe whom we eſteem moſt, and by this make ourſelves ſome recompenſe for the unwilling homage which we pay to merit. The parodies upon theſe poets made by *Ariſtophanes*, ought to be conſidered rather as encomiums than ſatires. They give us occaſion to examine whether the criticiſms are juſt or not in themſelves: but what is more important, they afford no proof that *Euripides* or his predeceſſors wanted the eſteem of *Ariſtophanes* or his age. The ſtatues raiſed to their honour, the reſpect paid by the *Athenians* to their writings, and the careful preſervation of thoſe writings themſelves, are immortal teſtimonies in their favour, and make it unneceſſary for me to ſtop any longer upon ſo plauſible a ſolution of ſo frivolous an objection.

Frequent ridicule of the gods.

V. The moſt troubleſome difficulty, and that which, ſo far as I know, has not yet been cleared to ſatisfaction, is the contemptuous manner in which *Ariſtophanes* treats the gods. Though I am perſuaded in my own mind that I have found the true ſolution of this queſtion, I am not ſure that it will make more impreſſion than that of *M. Boivin*, who

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who contents himſelf with ſaying, that every thing was allowed to the comick poets; and that even Atheiſm was permitted to the licentiouſneſs of the ſtage: that the *Athenians* applauded all that made them laugh; and believed that *Jupiter* himſelf laughed with them at the ſmart ſayings of a poet. Mr. *Collier*, an *Engliſhman*, in his remarks upon their ſtage, attempts to prove that *Ariſtophanes* was an open Atheiſt. For my part I am not ſatisfied with the account either of one or the other, and think it better to venture a new ſyſtem, of which I have already dropt ſome hints in this work. The truth is, that the *Athenians* profeſſed to be great laughers; always ready for merriment on whatever ſubject. But it cannot be conceived that *Ariſtophanes* ſhould, without puniſhment, publiſh himſelf an Atheiſt, unleſs we ſuppoſe that Atheiſm was the opinion likewiſe of the ſpectators, and of the judges commiſſioned to examine the plays; and yet this cannot be ſuſpected of thoſe who boaſted themſelves the moſt religious nation, and naturally the moſt ſuperſtitious of all *Greece*. How can we ſuppoſe thoſe to be Atheiſts who paſſed ſentence upon *Diagoras*, *Socrates*, and *Alcibiades*, for impiety? Theſe are glaring inconſiſtencies. To ſay like *M. Boivin*, for ſake of getting clear of the difficulty, that *Alcibiades*, *Socrates*, and *Diagoras*, attacked religion ſeriouſly, and were therefore not allowed, but that *Ariſtophanes* did it in jeſt, or was authoriſed by cuſtom, would be to trifle with the difficulty, and not to clear it. Though the *Athenians* loved merriment, it is not likely that if *Ariſtophanes* had profeſſed Atheiſm, they would have ſpared him more than *Socrates*, who had as much life and pleaſantry in his diſcourſes, as the poet in his co-

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medies. The pungent raillery of *Ariſtophanes*, and the fondneſs of the *Athenians* for it, are therefore not the true reaſon why the poet was ſpared when *Socrates* was condemned. I ſhall now ſolve the queſtion with great brevity.

The true anſwer to this queſtion is given by *Plutarch* in his treatiſe of reading of the poets. *Plutarch* attempts to prove that youth is not to be prohibited the reading of the poets; but to be cautioned againſt ſuch parts as may have bad effects. They are firſt to be prepoſſeſſed with this leading principle, that poetry is falſe and fabulous. He then enumerates at length the fables which *Homer* and other poets have invented about their deities; and concludes thus: "When therefore "there is found in poetical compoſitions any thing "ſtrange and ſhocking, with reſpect to gods, or demi-"gods, or concerning the virtue of any excellent and "renowned characters, he that ſhould receive theſe "fictions as truth would be corrupted by an erroneous "opinion: but he that always keeps in his mind the "fables and alluſions, which it is the buſineſs of poetry "to contrive, will not be injured by theſe ſtories, nor "receive any ill impreſſions upon his thoughts, but "will be ready to cenſure himſelf, if at any time he "happens to be afraid, leſt *Neptune* in his rage ſhould "ſplit the earth, and lay open the infernal regions." Some pages afterwards, he tells us, "That religion is "a thing difficult of comprehenſion, and above the "underſtanding of poets; which it is," ſays he, "neceſ-"ſary to have in mind when we read their fables."

The *Pagans* therefore had their fables, which they diſtinguiſhed from their religion; for no one can be perſuaded

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perſuaded that *Ovid* intended his *Metamorphoſes* as a true repreſentation of the religion of the *Romans*. The poets were allowed their imaginations about their gods, as things which have no regard to the publick worſhip. Upon this principle, I ſay, as I ſaid before, there was amongſt the *Pagans* two ſorts of religion; one a poetical, and a real religion: one practical, the other theatrical: a mythology for the poets, a theology for uſe. They had fables, and a worſhip, which though founded upon fable, was yet very different.

Diagoras, *Socrates*, *Plato*, and the philoſophers of *Athens*, with *Cicero*, their admirer, and the other pretended wiſe men of *Rome*, are men by themſelves. Theſe were the Atheiſts with reſpect to the ancients. We muſt not therefore look into *Plato*, or into *Cicero* for the real religion of the *Pagans*, as diſtinct from the fabulous. Theſe two authors involve themſelves in the clouds, that their opinions may not be diſcovered. They durſt not openly attack the real religion; but deſtroyed it by attacking fable.

To diſtinguiſh here with exactneſs the agreement or difference between fable and religion, is not at preſent my intention: it is not eaſy * to ſhow with exactneſs what was the *Athenian* notion of the nature of the gods whom they worſhipped. *Plutarch* himſelf tells us, that this was a thing very difficult for the philoſophers. It is ſufficient for me that the mythology and theology of the ancients were different at the bottom; that the names of the gods continued the ſame; and that long cuſtom gave up one to the caprices of

* See St. *Paul* upon the ſubject of the *Ignoto Deo*.

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the poets, without ſuppoſing the other affected by them. This being once ſettled upon the authority of the ancients themſelves, I am no longer ſurpriſed to ſee *Jupiter*, *Minerva*, *Neptune*, *Bacchus*, appear upon the ſtage in the comedy of *Ariſtophanes*; and at the ſame time receiving incenſe in the temples of *Athens*. This is, in my opinion, the moſt reaſonable account of a thing ſo obſcure; and I am ready to give up my ſyſtem to any other, by which the *Athenians* ſhall be made more conſiſtent with themſelves; thoſe *Athenians* who ſat laughing at the gods of *Ariſtophanes*, while they condemned *Socrates* for having appeared to deſpiſe the gods of his country.

The *Mimi* and *Pantomimes*.

VI. A word is now to be ſpoken of the *Mimi*, which had ſome relation to comedy. This appellation was, by the *Greeks* and *Romans*, given to certain dramatic performances, and to the actors that played them. The denomination ſufficiently ſhows, that their art conſiſted in imitation and buffoonery. Of their works, nothing, or very little, is remaining; ſo that they can only be conſidered by the help of ſome paſſages in authors: from which little is to be learned that deſerves conſideration. I ſhall extract the ſubſtance, as I did with reſpect to the chorus, without loſing time, by defining all the different ſpecies, or producing all the quotations, which would give the reader more trouble than inſtruction. He that deſires fuller inſtructions may read *Voſſius*, *Valois*, *Saumaiſes*, and *Gataker*, of whoſe compilations, however learned, I ſhould think it ſhame to be the author.

The *Mimi* had their original from comedy, of which at its firſt appearance they made a part; for their mimick

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mimick actors always played and exhibited groteſque dances in the comedies. The jealouſy of rivalſhip afterwards broke them off from the comick actors, and made them a company by themſelves. But to ſecure their reception, they borrowed from comedy all its drollery, wildneſs, groſſneſs, and licentiouſneſs. This amuſement they added to their dances, and they produced what are now called farces, or burlettas. Theſe farces had not the regularity or delicacy of comedies; they were only a ſucceſſion of ſingle ſcenes contrived to raiſe laughter; formed or unravelled without order and without connexion. They had no other end but to make the people laugh. Now and then there might be good ſentences, like the ſentences of *P. Syrus*, that are yet left us: but the groundwork was low comedy; and any thing of greater dignity drops in by chance. We muſt however imagine, that this odd ſpecies of the drama roſe at length to ſomewhat a higher character, ſince we are told that *Plato* the philoſopher laid the *Mimi* of *Sophron* under his pillow, and they were found there after his death. But in general we may ſay with truth, that it always diſcovered the meanneſs of its original, like a falſe pretenſion to nobility, in which the cheat is always diſcovered through the concealment of fictitious ſplendour.

Theſe *Mimi* were of two ſorts, of which the length was different, but the purpoſes the ſame. The *Mimi* of one ſpecies were ſhort; thoſe of the other long, and not quite ſo groteſque. Theſe two kinds were ſubdivided into many ſpecies, diſtinguiſhed by the dreſſes and characters, ſuch as ſhow drunkards, phyſicians, men, and women.

Thus

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Thus far of the *Greeks*. The *Romans* having borrowed of them the more noble ſhows of tragedy and comedy, were not content till they had their rhapſodies. They had their *planipedes*, who played with flat ſoles, that they might have the more agility; and their *Sannions*, whoſe head was ſhaved, that they might box the better. There is no need of naming here all who had a name for theſe diverſions among the *Greeks* and *Romans*. I have ſaid enough, and perhaps too much of this abortion of comedy, which drew upon itſelf the contempt of good men, the cenſures of the magiſtrates, and the indignation of the fathers of the church *.

Another ſet of players were called *Pantomimes*: theſe were at leaſt ſo far preferable to the former, that they gave no offence to the ears. They ſpoke only to the eyes; but with ſuch art of expreſſion, that without the utterance of a ſingle word, they repreſented, as we are told, a complete tragedy or comedy, in the ſame manner as dumb *Harlequin* is exhibited on our theatres. Theſe *Pantomimes* among the *Greeks* firſt mingled ſinging with their dances; afterwards, about the time of *Livius Andronicus*, the ſongs were performed by one part, and the dances by another. Afterwards, in the time of *Auguſtus*, when they were ſent for to *Rome*, for the diverſions of the people, whom he had enſlaved, they played comedies without ſongs or vocal utterance; but by the ſprightlineſs, activity, and efficacy of their

* It is the licentiouſneſs of the *Mimi* and *Pantomimes*, againſt which the cenſure of the Holy Fathers particularly breaks out, as againſt a thing irregular and indecent, without ſuppoſing it much connected with the cauſe of religion.

geſtures;

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geſtures; or, as *Sidonius Apollinaris* expreſſes it, *clauſis faucibus, et loquente geſtu*, they not only exhibited things and paſſions, but even the moſt delicate diſtinctions of paſſions, and the ſlighteſt circumſtances of facts. We muſt not however imagine, at leaſt in my opinion, that the *Pantomimes* did literally repreſent regular tragedies or comedies by the mere motions of their bodies. We may juſtly determine, notwithſtanding all their agility, their repreſentations would at laſt be very incomplete: yet we may ſuppoſe, with good reaſon, that their action was very lively; and that the art of imitation went great lengths, ſince it raiſed the admiration of the wiſeſt men, and made the people mad with eagerneſs. Yet when we read that one *Hylus*, the pupil of one *Pylades*, in the time of *Auguſtus*, divided the applauſes of the people with his maſter, when they repreſented *Oedipus*, or when *Juvenal* tells us, that *Bathillus* played *Leda*, and other things, of the ſame kind, it is not eaſy to believe that a ſingle man, without ſpeaking a word, could exhibit tragedies or comedies, and make ſtarts and bounds ſupply the place of vocal articulation. Notwithſtanding the obſcurity of this whole matter, one may know what to admit as certain, or how far a repreſentation could be carried by dance, poſture, and grimace. Among theſe artificial dances, of which we know nothing but the names, there was as early as the time of *Ariſtophanes* ſome extremely indecent. Theſe were continued in *Italy* from the time of *Auguſtus*, long after the emperors. It was a publick miſchief, which contributed in ſome meaſure to the decay and ruin of the *Roman* empire. To have a due deteſtation of theſe licentious entertainments, there is

no

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no need of any recourſe to the fathers; the wiſer *Pagans* tell us very plainly what they thought of them. I have made this mention of the *Mimi* and *Pantomimes*, only to ſhow how the moſt noble of publick ſpectacles were corrupted and abuſed, and to conduct the reader to the end through every road, and through all the by-paths of human wit, from *Homer* and *Eſchylus* to our own time.

Wanderings of the human mind in the birth and progreſs of theatrical repreſentations.

VII. That we may conclude this work by applying the principles laid down at the beginning, and extend it through the whole, I deſire the reader to recur to that point where I have repreſented the human mind as beginning the courſe of the drama. The chorus was firſt a hymn to *Bacchus*, produced by accident; art brought it to perfection, and delight made it a publick diverſion. *Theſpis* made a ſingle actor play before the people; this was the beginning of theatrical ſhows. *Eſchylus*, taking the idea of the *Iliad* and *Odyſſey*, animated, if I may ſo expreſs it, the epick poem, and gave a dialogue in place of ſimple recitation, puts the whole into action, and ſets it before the eyes, as if it was a preſent and real tranſaction: he gives the chorus * and intereſt in the ſcenes, contrives habits of dignity and theatrical decorations. In a word, he gives both to tragedy; or, more properly, draws it from the boſom of the epick poem. She made her appearance ſpark-

* *Eſchylus*, in my opinion, as well as the other poets his contemporaries, retained the chorus, not merely becauſe it was the faſhion, but becauſe examining tragedy to the bottom, they found it not rational to conceive, that an action great and ſplendid, like the revolution of a ſtate, could paſs without witneſſes.

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ling with graces, and displayed such majesty as gained every heart at the first view. *Sophocles* considers her more nearly, with the eyes of a critick, and finds that she has something still about her rough and swelling: he divests her of her false ornaments, teaches her a more regular walk, and more familiar dignity. *Euripides* was of opinion, that she ought to receive still more softness and tenderness; he teaches her the new art of pleasing by simplicity, and gives her the charms of graceful negligence; so that he makes her stand in suspense, whether she appears most to advantage in the dress of *Sophocles* sparkling with gems, or in that of *Euripides*, which is more simple and modest. Both indeed are elegant; but the elegance is of different kinds, between which no judgment as yet has decided the prize of superiority.

We can now trace it no farther; its progress amongst the *Greeks* is out of sight. We must pass at once to the time of *Augustus*, where *Apollo* and the Muses quitted their ancient residence in *Greece*, to fix their abode in *Italy*. But it is vain to ask questions of *Melpomene*; she is obstinately silent, and we only know from strangers her power amongst the *Romans*. *Seneca* endeavours to make her speak; but the gaudy show with which he rather loads than adorns her, makes us think that he took some phantom of *Melpomene* for the Muse herself.

Another flight, equally rapid with that to *Rome*, must carry us through thousands of years, from *Rome* to *France*. There in the time of *Lewis* XIV. we see the mind of man giving birth to tragedy a second time, as if the *Greek* tragedy had been utterly forgot. In the place

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place of *Eſchylus*, we have our *Rotrou*. In *Corneille* we have another *Sophocles*, and in *Racine* a ſecond *Euripides*. Thus is tragedy raiſed from her aſhes, carried to the utmoſt point of greatneſs, and ſo dazzling that ſhe prefers herſelf to herſelf. Surpriſed to ſee herſelf produced again in *France* in ſo ſhort a time, and nearly in the ſame manner as before in *Greece*, ſhe is diſpoſed to believe that her fate is to make a ſhort tranſition from her birth to her perfection, like the goddeſs that iſſued from the brain of *Jupiter*.

If we look back on the other ſide to the riſe of comedy, we ſhall ſee it hatched by *Margites* from the *Odyſſey* of *Homer*, in imitation of her eldeſt ſiſter; but we ſee her under the conduct of *Ariſtophanes* become licentious and petulant, taking airs to herſelf which the magiſtrates were obliged to cruſh. *Menander* reduced her to bounds, taught her at once gaiety and politeneſs, and enabled her to correct vice, without ſhocking the offenders. *Plautus*, among the *Romans*, to whom we muſt now paſs, united the earlier and the later comedy, and joined buffoonery with delicacy. *Terence*, who was better inſtructed, received comedy from *Menander*, and ſurpaſſed his original, as he endeavoured to copy it. And laſtly, *Moliere* produced a new ſpecies of comedy, which muſt be placed in a claſs by itſelf, in oppoſition to that of *Ariſtophanes*, whoſe manner is likewiſe peculiar to himſelf.

But ſuch is the weakneſs of the human mind, that when we review the ſucceſſions of the drama a third time, we find genius falling from its height, forgetting itſelf, and led aſtray by the love of novelty, and the deſire of ſtriking out new paths. Tragedy degenerated in

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in *Greece* from the time of *Ariſtotle*, and in *Rome* after *Auguſtus*. At *Rome* and *Athens* comedy produced *Mimi*, pantomimes, burlettas, tricks, and farces, for the ſake of variety; ſuch is the character, and ſuch the madneſs of the mind of man. It is ſatisfied with having made great conqueſts, and gives them up to attempt others, which are far from anſwering its expectation, and only enables it to diſcover its own folly, weakneſs, and deviations. But why ſhould we be tired with ſtanding ſtill at the true point of perfection, when it is attained? If eloquence be wearied, and forgets herſelf a while, yet ſhe ſoon returns to her former point: ſo will it happen to our theatres if the *French* Muſes will keep the *Greek* models in their view, and not look with diſdain upon a ſtage whoſe mother is nature, whoſe ſoul is paſſion, and whoſe art is ſimplicity: a ſtage, which, to ſpeak the truth, does not perhaps equal ours in ſplendour and elevation, but which excels it in ſimplicity and propriety, and equals it at leaſt in the conduct and direction of thoſe paſſions which may properly affect an honeſt man and a chriſtian.

For my part, I ſhall think myſelf well recompenſed for my labour, and ſhall attain the end which I had in view, if I ſhall in ſome little meaſure revive in the minds of thoſe who purpoſe to run the round of polite literature, not an immoderate and blind reverence, but a true taſte of antiquity: ſuch a taſte as both feeds and poliſhes the mind, and enriches it by enabling it to appropriate the wealth of foreigners, and to exert its natural fertility in exquiſite productions; ſuch a taſte as gave the *Racines*, the *Molieres*, the *Boileaus*, the *Fontaines*, the *Patrus*, the *Peleſſons*, and many other great geniuſes

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geniuſes of the laſt age, all that they were, and all that they will always be; ſuch a taſte as puts the ſeal of immortality to thoſe works in which it is diſcovered; a taſte ſo neceſſary, that without it we may be certain that the greateſt powers of nature will long continue in a ſtate below themſelves; for no man ought to allow himſelf to be flattered or ſeduced by the example of ſome men of genius, who have rather appeared to deſpiſe this taſte than to deſpiſe it in reality. It is true that excellent originals have given occaſion, without any fault of their own, to very bad copies. No man ought ſeverely to ape either the ancients or the moderns: but if it was neceſſary to run into an extreme of one ſide or the other, which is never done by a judicious and well-directed mind, it would be better for a wit, as for a painter, to enrich himſelf by what he can take from the ancients, than to grow poor by taking all from his own ſtock; or openly to affect an imitation of thoſe moderns whoſe more fertile genius has produced beauties peculiar to themſelves, and which themſelves only can diſplay with grace: beauties of that peculiar kind, that they are not fit to be imitated by others; though in thoſe who firſt invented them they may be juſtly eſteemed, and in them only.

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DEDICATIONS.

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A Complete Syſtem of ASTRONOMICAL CHRONOLOGY, unfolding the Scriptures. By JOHN KENNEDY, Rector of Bradley, in Derbyſhire. 4°. 1762.

To the KING.

SIR,

HAVING by long labour, and diligent enquiry, endeavoured to illuſtrate and eſtabliſh the chronology of the Bible, I hope to be pardoned the ambition of inſcribing my work to your Majeſty.

An age of war is not often an age of learning: the tumult and anxiety of military preparations ſeldom leave attention vacant to the ſilent progreſs of ſtudy, and the placid conqueſts of inveſtigation; yet, ſurely, a vindication of the inſpired writers can never be unſeaſonably offered to the DEFENDER OF THE FAITH, nor can it ever be improper to promote that religion without which all other bleſſings are ſnares of deſtruction, without which armies cannot make us ſafe, nor victories make us happy.

I am far from imagining that my teſtimony can add any thing to the honours of your Majeſty, to the ſplendour of a reign crowned with triumphs, to the beauty of a life dignified by virtue. I can only wiſh, that your reign may long continue ſuch as it has begun, and that the effulgence of your example may ſpread its light through diſtant ages, till it ſhall be the higheſt praiſe of any future monarch, that he exhibits ſome reſemblance of GEORGE THE THIRD.

I am, Sir,

Your Majeſty's, &c.

JOHN KENNEDY.

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LONDON and WESTMINSTER IMPROVED.
Illuſtrated by Plans. 4°. 1766.

To the KING.

SIR,

THE patronage of works which have a tendency towards advancing the happineſs of mankind, naturally belongs to great Princes; and publick good, in which publick elegance is compriſed, has ever been the object of your Majeſty's regard.

In the following pages your Majeſty, I flatter myſelf, will find, that I have endeavoured at extenſive and general uſefulneſs. Knowing, therefore, your Majeſty's early attention to the polite arts, and more particular affection for the ſtudy of architecture, I was encouraged to hope that the work which I now preſume to lay before your Majeſty, might be thought not unworthy your royal favour: and that the protection which your Majeſty always affords to thoſe who mean well, may be extended to,

Sir,
Your Majeſty's
moſt dutiful Subject,
and moſt obedient
and moſt humble Servant,
JOHN GWYNN.

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ADAMS'S TREATISE on the GLOBES. 1767.

To the KING.

SIR,

IT is the privilege of real greatneſs not to be afraid of diminution by condeſcending to the notice of little things: and I therefore can boldly ſolicit the patronage of your Majeſty to the humble labours by which I have endeavoured to improve the inſtruments of ſcience, and make the globes on which the earth and ſky are delineated leſs defective in their conſtruction, and leſs difficult in their uſe,

Geography is in a peculiar manner the ſcience of Princes. When a private ſtudent revolves the terraqueous globe, he beholds a ſucceſſion of countries in which he has no more intereſt than in the imaginary regions of Jupiter and Saturn. But your Majeſty muſt contemplate the ſcientific picture with other ſentiments, and conſider, as oceans and continents are rolling before you, how large a part of mankind is now waiting on your determinations, and may receive benefits or ſuffer evils, as your influence is extended or withdrawn.

The provinces which your Majeſty's arms have added to your dominions, make no inconſiderable part of the orb allotted to human beings. Your power is acknowledged by nations whoſe names we know not yet how to write, and whoſe boundaries we cannot yet deſcribe. But your Majeſty's lenity and beneficence gives us reaſon to expect the time, when ſcience ſhall be advanced by the diffuſion of happineſs: when the deſarts of America ſhall become pervious and ſafe: when thoſe who are now reſtrained by fear ſhall be at-

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tracted by reverence: and multitudes who now range the woods for prey, and live at the mercy of winds and ſeaſons, ſhall by the paternal care of your Majeſty enjoy the plenty of cultivated lands, the pleaſures of ſociety, the ſecurity of law, and the light of revelation.

I am, Sir,

Your Majeſty's moſt humble, moſt obedient, and moſt dutiful Subject and Servant,

GEORGE ADAMS.

Biſhop ZACHARY PEARCE's Poſthumous Works. 2 vols. 4°. Publiſhed by the Rev. Mr. DERBY, 1777.

To the KING.

SIR,

I PRESUME to lay before your Majeſty the laſt labours of a learned biſhop, who died in the toils and duties of his calling. He is now beyond the reach of all earthly honours and rewards; and only the hope of inciting others to imitate him, makes it now fit to be remembered, that he enjoyed in his life the favour of your Majeſty.

The tumultuary life of Princes ſeldom permits them to ſurvey the wide extent of national intereſt, without loſing ſight of private merit: to exhibit qualities which may be imitated by the higheſt and the humbleſt of mankind: and to be at once amiable and great.

Such characters, if now and then they appear in hiſtory, are contemplated with admiration. May it be the ambition of all your ſubjects to make haſte with their

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their tribute of reverence: and as poſterity may learn from your Majeſty how kings ſhould live, may they learn, likewiſe, from your people how they ſhould be honoured.

I am,
May it pleaſe your Majeſty,
with the moſt profound reſpect,
Your Majeſty's
moſt dutiful and devoted
Subject and Servant.

Hoole's Tranſlation of Taſso's Jerusalem Delivered. 1763.

To the QUEEN.

Madam,

To approach the high and the illuſtrious has been in all ages the privilege of poets; and though tranſlations cannot juſtly claim the ſame honour, yet they naturally follow their authors as attendants: and I hope that in return for having enabled Taſſo to diffuſe his fame through the Britiſh dominions, I may be introduced by him to the preſence of your Majeſty.

Taſſo has a peculiar claim to your Majeſty's favour, as follower and panegyriſt of the houſe of Eſte, which has one common anceſtor with the Houſe of Hanover; and in reviewing his life it is not eaſy to forbear a wiſh that he had lived in a happier time, when he might among the deſcendants of that illuſtrious family have found a more liberal and potent patronage.

I cannot but obſerve, Madam, how unequally reward is proportioned to merit, when I reflect that the hap-

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pineſs which was withheld from Taſſo is reſerved for me; and that the poem which once hardly procured to its author the countenance of the Princes of Ferrara, has attracted to its tranſlator the favourable notice of a BRITISH QUEEN.

Had this been the fate of Taſſo, he would have been able to have celebrated the condeſcenſion of your Majeſty in nobler language, but could not have felt it with more ardent gratitude, than,

Madam,

Your Majeſty's

moſt faithful and devoted Servant.

Dr. JAMES's MEDICINAL DICTIONARY. 3 vols. folio. 1743.

TO DR. MEAD.

SIR,

THAT the Medicinal Dictionary is dedicated to you, is to be imputed only to your reputation for ſuperior ſkill in thoſe ſciences which I have endeavoured to explain and facilitate; and you are, therefore, to conſider this addreſs, if it be agreeable to you, as one of the rewards of merit; and if otherwiſe, as one of the inconveniencies of eminence.

However you ſhall receive it, my deſign cannot be diſappointed; becauſe this publick appeal to your judgment will ſhew that I do not found my hopes of approbation upon the ignorance of my readers, and that I fear his cenſure leaſt, whoſe knowledge is moſt extenſive,

I am, Sir,

Your moſt obedient humble Servant,

R. JAMES.

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The FEMALE QUIXOTE. By Mrs. LENNOX. 1752.

To the Rt. Hon. the Earl of MIDDLESEX.

MY LORD,

SUCH is the power of intereſt over almoſt every mind, that no one is long without arguments to prove any poſition which is ardently wiſhed to be true, or to juſtify any meaſures which are dictated by inclination.

By this ſubtil ſophiſtry of deſire, I have been perſuaded to hope that this book may, without impropriety, be inſcribed to your lordſhip; but am not certain that my reaſons will have the ſame force upon other underſtandings.

The dread which a writer feels of the publick cenſure; the ſtill greater dread of neglect; and the eager wiſh for ſupport and protection, which is impreſſed by the conſciouſneſs of imbecility, are unknown to thoſe who have never adventured into the world; and I am afraid, my lord, equally unknown to thoſe who have always found the world ready to applaud them.

'Tis therefore not unlikely that the deſign of this addreſs may be miſtaken, and the effects of my fear imputed to my vanity. They who ſee your lordſhip's name prefixed to my performance will rather condemn my preſumption than compaſſionate my anxiety.

But, whatever be ſuppoſed my motive, the praiſe of judgment cannot be denied me: for, to whom can timidity ſo properly fly for ſhelter, as to him who has been ſo long diſtinguiſhed for candour and humanity? How can vanity be ſo compleatly gratified as by the allowed patronage of him, whoſe judgment has ſo long given

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given a ſtandard to the national taſte? Or by what other means could I ſo powerfully ſuppreſs all oppoſition, but that of envy, as by declaring myſelf,

My Lord,
Your Lordſhip's obliged and
moſt obedient Servant,
The AUTHOR.

SHAKESPEAR Illuſtrated; or, The NOVELS and HISTORIES on which the Plays of SHAKESPEAR are founded; collected and tranſlated from the original authors. With Critical Remarks. By the Author of the FEMALE QUIXOTE. 1753.

To the Right Hon. John, Earl of ORRERY.

MY LORD,

I HAVE no other pretence to the honour of a patronage ſo illuſtrious as that of your lordſhip, than the merit of attempting what has by ſome unaccountable neglect been hitherto omitted, though abſolutely neceſſary to a perfect knowledge of the abilities of Shakeſpear.

Among the powers that muſt conduce to conſtitute a poet, the firſt and moſt valuable is invention; the higheſt ſeems to be that which is able to produce a ſeries of events. It is eaſy when the thread of a ſtory is once drawn, to diverſify it with variety of colours; and when a train of action is preſented to the mind, a little acquaintance with life will ſupply circumſtances and reflections, and a little knowledge of books furniſh parallels and illuſtrations. To tell over again a ſtory that has been told already, and to tell it better than the firſt author, is no rare qualification; but to ſtrike out the

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the firſt hints of a new fable: hence to introduce a ſet of characters ſo diverſified in their ſeveral paſſions and intereſts, that from the claſhing of this variety may reſult many neceſſary incidents: to make theſe incidents ſurprizing, and yet natural, ſo as to delight the imagination without ſhocking the judgment of a reader; and finally to wind up the whole in a pleaſing cataſtrophe, produced by thoſe very means which ſeem moſt likely to oppoſe and prevent it, is the utmoſt effort of the human mind.

To diſcover how few of thoſe writers, who profeſs to recount imaginary adventures, have been able to produce any thing by their own imagination, would require too much of that time which your lordſhip employs in nobler ſtudies. Of all the novels and romances that wit or idleneſs, vanity or indigence, have puſhed into the world, there are very few of which the end cannot be conjectured from the beginning; or where the authors have done more than to tranſpoſe the incidents of other tales, or ſtrip the circumſtances from one event for the decoration of another.

In the examination of a poet's character, it is therefore firſt to be inquired what degree of invention has been exerted by him. With this view I have very diligently read the works of Shakeſpear, and now preſume to lay the reſult of my ſearches before your lordſhip, before that judge whom Pliny himſelf would have wiſhed for his aſſeſſor to hear a literary cauſe.

How much the tranſlation of the following novels will add to the reputation of Shakeſpear, or take away from it, you, my lord, and men learned and candid like you, if any ſuch can be found, muſt now determine.

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determine. Some danger, I am informed there is, leſt his admirers ſhould think him injured by this attempt, and clamour as at the diminution of the honour of that nation which boaſts itſelf the parent of ſo great a poet.

That no ſuch enemies may ariſe againſt me (though I am unwilling to believe it) I am far from being too confident, for who can fix bounds to bigotry and folly? My *ſex*, my *age*, have not given me many opportunities of mingling in the world: there may be in it many a ſpecies of abſurdity which I have never ſeen, and among them ſuch vanity as pleaſes itſelf with falſe praiſe beſtowed on another, and ſuch ſuperſtition as worſhips idols, without ſuppoſing them to be gods.

But the truth is, that a very ſmall part of the reputation of this mighty genius depends upon the naked plot or ſtory of his plays. He lived in an age when the books of chivalry were yet popular, and when therefore the minds of his auditors were not accuſtomed to balance probabilities, or to examine nicely the proportion between cauſes and effects. It was ſufficient to recommend a ſtory, that it was far removed from common life, that its changes were frequent, and its cloſe pathetic.

This diſpoſition of the age concurred ſo happily with the imagination of Shakeſpear, that he had no deſire to reform it; and indeed to this he was indebted for the licentious variety, by which he made his plays more entertaining than thoſe of any other author.

He had looked with great attention on the ſcenes of nature: but his chief ſkill was in human actions, paſſions, and habits: he was therefore delighted with ſuch tales as afforded numerous incidents, and exhibited many characters in many changes of ſituation. Theſe

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characters are so copiously diversified, and some of them so justly pursued, that his works may be considered as a map of life, a faithful miniature of human transactions; and he that has read Shakespear with attention will perhaps find little new in the crouded world.

Among his other excellencies it ought to be remarked, because it has hitherto been unnoticed, that his *heroes are men*, that the love and hatred, the hopes and fears of his chief personages are such as are common to other human beings, and not like those which later times have exhibited, peculiar to phantoms that strut upon the stage.

It is not perhaps very necessary to inquire whether the vehicle of so much delight and instruction be a story probable or unlikely, native or foreign. Shakespear's excellence is not the fiction of a tale, but the representation of life: and his reputation is therefore safe, till human nature shall be changed. Nor can he, who has so many just claims to praise, suffer by losing that which ignorant admiration has unreasonably given him. To calumniate the dead is baseness, and to flatter them is surely folly.

From flattery, my lord, either of the dead or the living, I wish to be clear, and have therefore solicited the countenance of a patron, whom, if I knew how to praise him, I could praise with truth, and have the world on my side; whose candour and humanity are universally acknowledged, and whose judgment perhaps was then first to be doubted, when he condescended to admit this address from,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obliged
and most obedient humble Servant,
The AUTHOR.

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diſcord, which muſt inevitably prevail among men that have loſt all ſenſe of divine ſuperintendence, and have no higher motive of action or forbearance, than preſent opinion of preſent intereſt.

It is the duty of private men to ſupplicate and propoſe; it is yours to hear and to do right. Let religion be once more reſtored, and the nation ſhall once more be great and happy. This conſequence is not far diſtant: that nation muſt always be powerful where every man performs his duty: and every man will perform his duty that conſiders himſelf as a being whoſe condition is to be ſettled to all eternity by the laws of *Chriſt*.

The only doctrine by which man can be made *wiſe unto ſalvation*, is the will of God, revealed in the books of the Old and the New Teſtament.

To ſtudy the ſcriptures, therefore, according to his abilities and attainments, is every man's duty, and to facilitate that ſtudy to thoſe whom nature hath made weak, or education has left ignorant, or indiſpenſable cares detain from regular proceſſes of inquiry, is the buſineſs of thoſe who have been bleſſed with abilities and learning, and are appointed the inſtructors of the lower claſſes of men, by that common father, who diſtributes to all created beings their qualifications and employments; who has allotted ſome to the labour of the hand, and ſome to the exerciſe of the mind; has commanded ſome to teach, and others to learn; has preſcribed to ſome the patience of inſtruction, and to others the meekneſs of obedience.

By what methods the unenlightened and ignorant may be made proper readers of the word of God, has been

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been long and diligently conſidered. Commentaries of all kinds have indeed been copiouſly produced: but there ſtill remain multitudes to whom the labours of the learned are of little uſe, for whom expoſitions require an expoſitor. To thoſe, indeed, who read the divine books without vain curioſity, or a deſire to be wiſe beyond their powers, it will always be eaſy to diſcern the ſtrait path, to find the words of everlaſting life. But ſuch is the condition of our nature, that we are always attempting what it is difficult to perform: he who reads the ſcripture to gain goodneſs, is deſirous likewiſe to gain knowledge, and by his impatience of ignorance, falls into error.

This danger has appeared to the doctors of the Romiſh church, ſo much to be feared, and ſo difficult to be eſcaped, that they have ſnatched the Bible out of the hands of the people, and confined the liberty of peruſing it to thoſe whom literature has previouſly qualified. By this expedient they have formed a kind of uniformity, I am afraid too much like that of colours in the dark: but they have certainly uſurped a power which God has never given them, and precluded great numbers from the higheſt ſpiritual conſolation.

I know not whether this prohibition has not brought upon them an evil which they themſelves have not diſcovered. It is granted, I believe, by the Romaniſts themſelves, that the beſt commentaries on the Bible have been the works of Proteſtants. I know not, indeed, whether, ſince the celebrated paraphraſe of Eraſmus, any ſcholar has appeared amongſt them, whoſe works are much valued, even in his own communion. Why have thoſe who excell in every other kind of knowledge,

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to whom the world owes much of the increaſe of light which has ſhone upon theſe latter ages, failed, and failed only when they have attempted to explain the ſcriptures of God? Why, but becauſe they are in the church leſs read and leſs examined, becauſe they have another rule of deciding controverſies, and inſtituting laws.

Of the Bible ſome of the books are prophetical, ſome doctrinal and hiſtorical, as the goſpels, of which we have in the ſubſequent pages attempted an illuſtration. The books of the evangeliſts contain an account of the life of our bleſſed SAVIOUR, more particularly of the years of his miniſtry, interſperſed with his precepts, doctrines, and predictions. Each of theſe hiſtories contain facts and dictates related likewiſe in the reſt, that the truth might be eſtabliſhed by concurrence of teſtimony; and each has likewiſe facts and dictates which the reſt omit, to prove that they were wrote without communication.

Theſe writers not affecting the exactneſs of chronologers, and relating various events of the ſame life, or the ſame events with various circumſtances, have ſome difficulties to him, who, without the help of many books, deſires to collect a ſeries of the acts and precepts of Jeſus Chriſt; fully to know his life, whoſe example was given for our imitation; fully to underſtand his precepts, which it is ſure deſtruction to diſobey.

In this work, therefore, an attempt has been made, by the help of harmoniſts and expoſitors, to reduce the four goſpels into one ſeries of narration, to form a complete hiſtory out of the different narratives of the evangeliſts, by inſerting every event in the order of time,

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and connecting every precept of life and doctrine, with the occaſion on which it was delivered; ſhewing, as far as hiſtory or the knowledge of ancient cuſtoms can inform us, the reaſon and propriety of every action; and explaining, or endeavouring to explain, every precept and declaration in its true meaning.

Let it not be haſtily concluded, that we intend to ſubſtitute this book for the goſpels, or obtrude our own expoſitions as the oracles of God. We recommend to the unlearned reader to conſult us when he finds any difficulty, as men who have laboured not to deceive ourſelves, and who are without any temptation to deceive him: but as men, however, that, while they mean beſt may be miſtaken. Let him be careful, therefore, to diſtinguiſh what we cite from the goſpels, from what we offer as our own: he will find many difficulties removed; and if ſome yet remain, let him remember that *God is in heaven and we upon earth*, that *our thoughts are not God's thoughts*, and that the great cure of doubt is an humble mind.

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ANGELL'S STENOGRAPHY, or SHORT-HAND Improved. 1758.

To the Moſt Noble CHARLES Duke of RICHMOND, LENNOX, AUBIGNY, &c.

May it pleaſe your GRACE,

THE improvement of arts and ſciences has always been eſteemed laudable; and in proportion to their utility and advantage to mankind, they have generally gained the patronage of perſons the moſt diſtinguiſhed for birth, learning, and reputation in the world. This is an art undoubtedly of public utility, and which has been cultivated by perſons of diſtinguiſhed abilities, as will appear from its hiſtory. But as moſt of their ſyſtems have been defective, clogged with a multiplicity of rules, and perplexed by arbitrary, intricate, and impracticable ſchemes, I have endeavoured to rectify their defects, to adapt it to all capacities, and render it of general, laſting, and extenſive benefit. How this is effected the following plates will ſufficiently explain, to which I have prefixed a ſuitable introduction, and a conciſe and impartial hiſtory of the origin and progreſſive improvements of this art. And as I have ſubmitted the whole to the inſpection of accurate judges, whoſe approbation I am honoured with, I moſt humbly crave leave to publiſh it to the world under your Grace's patronage; not merely on account of your great dignity and high rank in life, though theſe receive a luſtre from your Grace's humanity; but alſo from a knowledge of your Grace's diſpoſition to encourage every uſeful art, and favour all true promoters of ſcience. That your Grace may

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may long live the friend of learning, the guardian of liberty, and the patron of virtue, and then tranſmit your name with the higheſt honour and eſteem to lateſt poſterity, is the ardent wiſh of

Your Grace's moſt humble, &c *.

* This is the Dedication mentioned by Dr. Johnſon himſelf in Boſwell's Life, vol. ii. 226. I ſhould not elſe have ſuſpected what has ſo little of his manner. C.

BARETTI'S DICTIONARY of the ENGLISH and ITALIAN LANGUAGES. 2 vols. 4°. 1760.

To his Excellency DON FELIX, Marquis of ABREU and BERTODANO, Ambaſſador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary from his Catholic Majeſty to the King of Great Britain.

MY LORD,

THAT acuteneſs of penetration into characters and deſigns, and that nice diſcernment of human paſſions and practices which have raiſed you to your preſent height of ſtation and dignity of employment, have long ſhewn you that dedicatory addreſſes are written for the ſake of the author more frequently than of the patron; and though they profeſs only reverence and zeal, are commonly dictated by intereſt or vanity.

I ſhall therefore not endeavour to conceal my motives, but confeſs that the Italian Dictionary is dedicated to your Excellency, that I might gratify my vanity, by making it known, that in a country where I am a ſtranger, I have been able, without any external re-

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commendation, to obtain the notice and countenance of a nobleman ſo eminent for knowledge and ability, that in his twenty-third year he was ſent as Plenipotentiary to ſuperintend, at Aix-la-Chapelle, the intereſts of a nation remarkable above all others for gravity and prudence: and who at an age, when very few are admitted to public truſt, tranſacts the moſt important affairs between two of the greateſt monarchs of the world.

If I could attribute to my own merits the favours which your Excellency every day confers upon me, I know not how much my pride might be inflamed; but when I obſerve the extenſive benevolence and boundleſs liberality by which all who have the honour to approach you, are diſmiſſed more happy than they come, I am afraid of raiſing my own value, ſince I dare not aſcribe it ſo much to my power of pleaſing as your willingneſs to be pleaſed.

Yet as every man is inclined to flatter himſelf, I am deſirous to hope that I am not admitted to greater intimacy than others without ſome qualifications for ſo advantageous a diſtinction, and ſhall think it my duty to juſtify, by conſtant reſpect and ſincerity, the favours which you have been pleaſed to ſhow me.

I am, my Lord,

Your Excellency's moſt humble
and moſt obedient Servant,

J. BARETTI.

London,
Jan. 12, 1760.

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The ENGLISH WORKS of ROGER ASCHAM, edited by JAMES BENNET. 4°. 1767.

To the Right Hon. ANTHONY ASHLEY COOPER, Earl of SHAFTESBURY, Baron ASHLEY, Lord Lieutenant and Cuſtos Rotularum of DORSETSHIRE, F.R.S.

MY LORD,

HAVING endeavoured, by an elegant and uſeful edition, to recover the eſteem of the Publick to an Author undeſervedly neglected, the only care which I now owe to his memory, is that of inſcribing his works to a patron whoſe acknowledged eminence of character may awaken attention and attract regard.

I have not ſuffered the zeal of an editor ſo far to take poſſeſſion of my mind, as that I ſhould obtrude upon your Lordſhip any productions unſuitable to the dignity of your rank or of your ſentiments. Aſcham was not only the chief ornament of a celebrated college, but viſited foreign countries, frequented courts, and lived in familiarity with ſtateſmen and princes; not only inſtructed ſcholars in literature, but formed ELIZABETH to empire.

To propagate the works of ſuch a writer will not be unworthy of your Lordſhip's patriotiſm: for I know not what greater benefits you can confer on your country, than that of preſerving worthy names from oblivion, by joining them with your own.

I am, my Lord,
Your Lordſhip's moſt obliged,
moſt obedient and moſt humble Servant,
JAMES BENNET.

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PREFACE to "NEW TABLES of INTEREST: Deſigned to anſwer, in the moſt correct and expeditious manner, the common purpoſes of buſineſs, particularly the buſineſs of the Public Funds. By JOHN PAYNE, of the Bank of England." 1758.

AMONG the writers of fiction, whoſe buſineſs is to furniſh that entertainment which fancy perpetually demands, it is a ſtanding plea, that the beauties of nature are now exhauſted: that imitation has exerted all its power, and that nothing more can be done for the ſervice of their miſtreſs, than to exhibit a perpetual tranſpoſition of known objects, and draw new pictures, not by introducing new images, but by giving new lights and ſhades, a new arrangement and colouring to the old. This plea has been chearfully admitted: and fancy, led by the hand of a ſkilful guide, treads over again the flowery path ſhe has often trod before, as much enamoured with every new diverſification of the ſame proſpect, as with the firſt appearance of it.

In the regions of ſcience, however, there is not the ſame indulgence: the underſtanding and the judgment travel there in the purſuit of truth, whom they always expect to find in one ſimple form, free from the diſguiſes of dreſs and ornament: and, as they travel with laborious ſtep and a fixed eye, they are content to ſtop when the ſhades of night darken the proſpect, and patiently wait the radiance of a new morning, to lead them forward in the path they have choſen, which, however thorny, or however ſteep, is ſeverely preferred to the

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the moſt pleaſing excurſions that bring them no nearer to the object of their ſearch. The plea, therefore, that nature is exhauſted, and that nothing is left to gratify the mind, but different combinations of the ſame ideas, when urged as a reaſon for multiplying unneceſſary labours among the ſons of ſcience, is not ſo readily admitted: the underſtanding, when in poſſeſſion of truth, is ſatisfied with the ſimple acquiſition; and not, like fancy, inclined to wander after new pleaſures in the diverſification of objects already known, which, perhaps, may lead to error.

But notwithſtanding this general diſinclination to accumulate labours for the ſake of that pleaſure which ariſes merely from different modes of inveſtigating truth, yet, as the mines of ſcience have been diligently opened, and their treaſures widely diffuſed, there may be parts choſen, which, by a proper combination and arrangement, may contribute not only to entertainment but uſe, like the rays of the ſun, collected in a concave mirrour, to ſerve particular purpoſes of light and heat.

The power of arithmetical numbers has been tried to a vaſt extent, and variouſly applied to the improvement both of buſineſs and ſcience. In particular, ſo many calculations have been made with reſpect to the value and uſe of money, that ſome ſerve only for ſpeculation and amuſement; and there is great opportunity for ſelecting a few that are peculiarly adapted to common buſineſs, and the daily interchanges of property among men. Thoſe which happen in the Public Funds are, at this time, the moſt frequent and numerous: and to anſwer the purpoſes of that buſineſs, in ſome degree, more perfectly than has hitherto been done, the

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the following tables are publiſhed. What that degree of perfection above other tables of the ſame kind may be, is a matter, not of opinion and taſte, in which many might vary, but of accuracy and uſefulneſs, with reſpect to which moſt will agree. The approbation they meet with will, therefore, depend upon the experience of thoſe for whom they were principally deſigned, the proprietors of the publick funds, and the brokers who tranſact the buſineſs of the funds, to whoſe patronage they are chearfully committed.

Among the Brokers of Stocks are men of great honour and probity, who are candid and open in all their tranſactions, and incapable of mean and ſelfiſh purpoſes: and it is to be lamented, that a market of ſuch importance as the preſent ſtate of this nation has made theirs, ſhould be brought into any diſcredit, by the intruſion of bad men, who, inſtead of ſerving their country, and procuring an honeſt ſubſiſtence in the army or the fleet, endeavour to maintain luxurious tables, and ſplendid equipages, by ſporting with the public credit.

It is not long ſince the evil of ſtock-jobbing was riſen to ſuch an enormous height, as to threaten great injury to every actual proprietor: particularly to many widows and orphans, who being bound to depend upon the funds for their whole ſubſiſtence, could not poſſibly retreat from the approaching danger. But this evil, after many unſucceſsful attempts of the legiſlature to conquer it, was, like many other, at length ſubdued by its own violence; and the reputable Stock-brokers ſeem now to have it in their power effectually to prevent its return, by not ſuffering the moſt diſtant approaches of it to take

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take footing in their own practice, and by oppoſing every effort made for its recovery by the deſperate ſons of fortune, who, not having the courage of highwaymen, take 'Change-Alley rather than the road, becauſe though more injurious than highwaymen, they are leſs in danger of puniſhment by the loſs either of liberty or life.

With reſpect to the other patrons to whoſe encouragement theſe Tables have been recommended, the proprietors of the public funds, who are buſy in the improvement of their fortunes, it is ſufficient to ſay—that no motive can ſanctify the accumulation of wealth, but an ardent deſire to make the moſt honourable and virtuous uſe of it, by contributing to the ſupport of good government, the increaſe of arts and induſtry, the rewards of genius and virtue, and the relief of wretchedneſs and want.

What Good, what True, what Fit we juſtly call,
Let this be all our care—for this is All;
To lay this TREASURE up, and hoard with haſte
What *ev'ry day* will want, and moſt the *laſt*.
This done, the pooreſt can no wants endure;
And this not done, the richeſt muſt be poor.

POPE.

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THE

ADVENTURER*.

NUMB. 34. SATURDAY, *March* 3, 1753.

Has toties optata exegit gloria pœnas. JUV.
Such fate purſues the votaries of praiſe.

To the ADVENTURER.

SIR, *Fleet-priſon, Feb.* 24.

TO a benevolent diſpoſition, every ſtate of life will afford ſome opportunities of contributing to the welfare of mankind. Opulence and ſplendor are enabled to diſpel the cloud of adverſity, to dry up the tears of the widow and the orphan, and to increaſe the felicity of all around them: their example

* Five of theſe papers, Nos. 39. 67. 74, 81. and 128. are now reſtored to this edition of Dr. Johnſon's works. They have hitherto been omitted probably owing to Sir John Hawkins having made uſe of ſome incorrect copy of the Adventurer from whence he ſelected what were written by Dr. Johnſon. Mr. Boſwell's account of this paper is in many reſpects erroneous. See BRITISH ESSAYISTS, Preface to the Adventurer, p. 30—35. C.

will

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will animate virtue, and retard the progreſs of vice. And even indigence and obſcurity, though without power to confer happineſs, may at leaſt prevent miſery, and apprize thoſe who are blinded by their paſſions, that they are on the brink of irremediable calamity.

Pleaſed, therefore, with the thought of recovering others from that folly which has embittered my own days, I have preſumed to addreſs the *Adventurer* from the dreary manſions of wretchedneſs and deſpair, of which the gates are ſo wonderfully conſtructed, as to fly open for the reception of ſtrangers, though they are impervious as a rock of adamant to ſuch as are within them :

——Facilis deſcenſus Averni;
Noctes atque dies patet atri janua Ditis:
Sed revocare gradum, ſuperaſque evadere ad auras,
Hoc opus hic labor eſt. VIRG.

The gates of Hell are open night and day;
Smooth the deſcent, and eaſy is the way:
But to return and view the cheerful ſkies;
In this the taſk and mighty labour lies. DRYDEN.

Suffer me to acquaint you, Sir, that I have glittered at the ball, and ſparkled in the circle; that I have had the happineſs to be the unknown favourite of an unknown lady at the maſquerade, have been the delight of tables of the firſt faſhion, and the envy of my brother beaux; and to deſcend a little lower, it is, I believe, ſtill remembered, that Meſſrs. *Velours* and *d'Eſpagne* ſtand indebted for a great part of their preſent influence at

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at *Guildhall*, to the elegance of my ſhape, and the graceful freedom of my carriage.

——Sed quæ præclara et proſpera tanti,
Ut rebus lætis par ſit menſura malorum! JUV.

See the wild purchaſe of the bold and vain,
Where every bliſs is bought with equal pain!

As I entered into the world very young, with an elegant perſon and a large eſtate, it was not long before I diſentangled myſelf from the ſhackles of religion; for I was determined to the purſuit of pleaſure, which according to my notions conſiſted in the unreſtrained and unlimited gratifications of every paſſion and every appetite; and as this could not be obtained under the frowns of a perpetual dictator, I conſidered religion as my enemy; and proceeding to treat her with contempt and deriſion, was not a little delighted, that the unfaſhionableneſs of her appearance, and the unanimated uniformity of her motions, afforded frequent opportunities for the ſallies of my imagination.

Conceiving now that I was ſufficiently qualified to laugh away ſcruples, I imparted my remarks to thoſe among my female favourites, whoſe virtue I intended to attack; for I was well aſſured, that pride would be able to make but a weak defence, when religion was ſubverted; nor was my ſucceſs below my expectation: the love of pleaſure is too ſtrongly implanted in the female breaſt, to ſuffer them ſcrupulouſly to examine the validity of arguments deſigned to weaken reſtraint; all are eaſily led to believe, that whatever thwarts their inclination muſt be wrong: little more, therefore, was required,

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required, than by the addition of ſome circumſtances, and the exaggeration of others, to make merriment ſupply the place of demonſtration; nor was I ſo ſenſeleſs as to offer arguments to ſuch as could not attend to them, and with whom a repartee or catch would more effectually anſwer the ſame purpoſe. This being effected, there remained only "the dread of the world:" but *Roxana* ſoared too high, to think the opinion of others worthy her notice; *Lætitia* ſeemed to think of it only to declare, that "if all her hairs were worlds;" ſhe ſhould reckon them "well loſt for love;" and *Paſtorella* fondly conceived, that ſhe could dwell for ever by the ſide of a bubbling fountain, content with her ſwain and fleecy care; without conſidering that ſtillneſs and ſolitude can afford ſatisfaction only to innocence.

It is not the deſire of new acquiſitions, but the glory of conqueſts, that fires the ſoldier's breaſt; as indeed the town is ſeldom worth much, when it has ſuffered the devaſtations of a ſiege; ſo that though I did not openly declare the effects of my own proweſs, which is forbidden by the laws of honour, it cannot be ſuppoſed that I was very ſolicitous to bury my reputation, or to hinder accidental diſcoveries. To have gained one victory, is an inducement to hazard a ſecond engagement: and though the ſucceſs of the general ſhould be a reaſon for increaſing the ſtrength of the fortification, it becomes, with many, a pretence for an immediate ſurrender, under the notion that no power is able to withſtand ſo formidable an adverſary; while others brave the danger, and think it mean to ſurrender, and daſtardly to fly. *Meliſſa*, indeed, knew better; and

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and though ſhe could not boaſt the apathy, ſteadineſs, and inflexibility of a *Cato*, wanted not the more prudent virtue of *Scipio*, and gained the victory by declining the conteſt.

You muſt not, however, imagine, that I was, during this ſtate of abandoned libertiniſm, ſo fully convinced of the fitneſs of my own conduct, as to be free from uneaſineſs. I knew very well, that I might juſtly be deemed the peſt of ſociety, and that ſuch proceedings muſt terminate in the deſtruction of my health and fortune; but to admit thoughts of this kind was to live upon the rack: I fled, therefore, to the regions of mirth and jollity, as they are called, and endeavoured with burgundy, and a continual rotation of company to free myſelf from the pangs of reflection. From theſe orgies we frequently ſallied forth in queſt of adventures, to the no ſmall terror and conſternation of all the ſober ſtragglers that came in our way: and though we never injured, like our illuſtrious progenitors, the *Mohocks*, either life or limbs; yet we have in the midſt of *Covent Garden* buried a taylor, who had been troubleſome to ſome of our fine gentlemen, beneath a heap of cabbage-leaves and ſtalks, with this conceit,

Satia te caule quem ſemper cupiſti.

Glut yourſelf with cabbage of which you have always been greedy.

There can be no reaſon for mentioning the common exploits of breaking windows and bruiſing the watch; unleſs it be to tell you of the device of producing before the juſtice broken lanthorns, which have been paid

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for an hundred times: or their appearances with patches on their heads, under pretence of being cut by the ſword that was never drawn; nor need I ſay any thing of the more formidable attack of ſturdy chairmen, armed with poles; by a ſlight ſtroke of which, the pride of *Ned Revel*'s face was at once laid flat, and that effected in an inſtant, which its moſt mortal foe had for years aſſayed in vain. I ſhall paſs over the accidents that attended attempts to ſcale windows, and endeavours to diſlodge ſigns from their hooks: there are many "hair-breadth 'ſcapes," beſides thoſe in the "imminent deadly breach;" but the rake's life, though it be equally hazardous with that of the ſoldier, is neither accompanied with preſent honour nor with pleaſing retroſpect; ſuch is, and ſuch ought to be the difference, between the enemy and the preſerver of his country.

Amidſt ſuch giddy and thoughtleſs extravagance, it will not ſeem ſtrange, that I was often the dupe of coarſe flattery. When Monſ. *L'Allonge* aſſured me that I thruſt quart over arm better than any man in *England*, what could I leſs than preſent him with a ſword that coſt me thirty pieces? I was bound for a hundred pounds for *Tom Trippet*, becauſe he had declared that he would dance a minuet with any man in the three kingdoms except myſelf. But I often parted with money againſt my inclination, either becauſe I wanted the reſolution to refuſe, or dreaded the appellation of a niggardly fellow; and I may be truly ſaid to have ſquandered my eſtate, without honour, without friends, and without pleaſure. The laſt may, perhaps, appear ſtrange to men unacquainted with the maſquerade of life:

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life: I deceived others, and I endeavoured to deceive myſelf; and have worn the face of pleaſantry and gaiety, while my heart ſuffered the moſt exquiſite torture.

By the inſtigation and encouragement of my friends, I became at length ambitious of a ſeat in parliament; and accordingly ſet out for the town of *Wallop* in the weſt, where my arrival was welcomed by a thouſand throats, and I was in three days ſure of a majority: but after drinking out one hundred and fifty hogſheads of wine, and bribing two-thirds of the corporation twice over, I had the mortification to find, that the borough had been before ſold to Mr. *Courtly*.

In a life of this kind, my fortune, though conſiderable, was preſently diſſipated; and as the attraction grows more ſtrong the nearer any body approaches the earth, when once a man begins to ſink into poverty, he falls with velocity always increaſing; every ſupply is purchaſed at a higher and higher price, and every office of kindneſs obtained with greater and greater difficulty. Having now acquainted you with my ſtate of elevation, I ſhall if you encourage the continuance of my correſpondence, ſhew you by what ſteps I deſcended from a firſt floor in *Pall-Mall* to my preſent habitation.

I am, SIR,

Your humble ſervant,

MYSARGYRUS.

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NUMB. 39. TUESDAY, *March* 20, 1753.

—Οὐσεας φυλλοισι καλυψατο, τω δ' ἀρ Αθηνη
Υπνον επ' ὀμμασι χευ, ἱνα μιν παυσειε ταχιστα
Δυσπονιης καματοιο. HOM.

Pallas pour'd ſweet ſlumbers on his ſoul;
And balmy dreams, the gift of ſoft repoſe,
Calm'd all his pains, and baniſh'd all his woes.
POPE.

IF every day did not produce freſh inſtances of the ingratitude of mankind, we might, perhaps, be at a loſs, why ſo liberal and impartial a benefactor as Sleep, ſhould meet with ſo few hiſtorians or panegyriſts. Writers are ſo totally abſorbed by the buſineſs of the day, as never to turn their attention to that power, whoſe officious hand ſo ſeaſonably ſuſpends the burthen of life: and without whoſe interpoſition, man would not be able to endure the fatigue of labour, however rewarded, or the ſtruggle with oppoſition, however ſucceſsful.

Night, though ſhe divides to many the longeſt part of life, and to almoſt all the moſt innocent and happy, is yet unthankfully neglected, except by thoſe who pervert her gifts.

The aſtronomers, indeed, expect her with impatience, and felicitate themſelves upon her arrival; *Fontenelle* has not failed to celebrate her praiſes; and to chide the ſun for hiding from his view the worlds, which he imagines to appear in every conſtellation. Nor have the

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the poets been always deficient in her praiſes: *Milton* has obſerved of the Night, that it is 'the pleaſant time, 'the cool, the ſilent.'

Theſe men may, indeed, well be expected to pay particular homage to Night; ſince they are indebted to her, not only for ceſſation of pain, but increaſe of pleaſure; not only for ſlumber, but for knowledge. But the greater part of her avowed votaries are the ſons of luxury; who appropriate to feſtivity the hours deſigned for reſt; who conſider the reign of pleaſure as commencing, when day begins to withdraw her buſy multitudes, and ceaſes to diſſipate attention by intruſive and unwelcome variety; who begin to awake to joy when the reſt of the world ſinks into inſenſibility; and revel in the ſoft affluence of flattering and artificial lights, which 'more ſhadowy ſet off the face of things.'

Without touching upon the fatal conſequences of a cuſtom, which, as *Ramazzini* obſerves, will be for ever condemned, and for ever retained; it may be obſerved, that however Sleep may be put off from time to time, yet the demand is of ſo importunate a nature, as not to remain long unſatisfied: and if, as ſome have done, we conſider it as the tax of life, we cannot but obſerve it as a tax that muſt be paid, unleſs we could ceaſe to be men; for *Alexander* declared, that nothing convinced him that he was not a divinity, but his not being able to live without ſleep.

To live without ſleep in our preſent fluctuating ſtate, however deſirable it might ſeem to the lady in *Clelia*, can ſurely be the wiſh only of the young or the ignorant; to every one elſe, a perpetual vigil will appear to be a ſtate of wretchedneſs, ſecond only to that of the miſer-

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able beings, whom *Swift* has in his travels ſo elegantly deſcribed, as 'ſupremely curſed with immortality.'

Sleep is neceſſary to the happy, to prevent ſatiety, and to endear life by a ſhort abſence; and to the miſerable, to relieve them by intervals of quiet. Life is to moſt, ſuch as could not be endured without frequent intermiſſion of exiſtence; *Homer*, therefore, has thought it an office worthy of the goddeſs of wiſdom, to lay *Ulyſſes* aſleep when landed on *Phæacia*.

It is related of *Barretier*, whoſe early advances in literature ſcarce any human mind has equalled, that he ſpent twelve hours of the four-and-twenty in ſleep; yet this appears from the bad ſtate of his health, and the ſhortneſs of his life, to have been too ſmall a reſpite for a mind ſo vigorouſly and intenſely employed: it is to be regretted, therefore, that he did not exerciſe his mind leſs, and his body more: ſince by this means, it is highly probable, that though he would not then have aſtoniſhed with the blaze of a comet, he would yet have ſhone with the permanent radiance of a fixed ſtar.

Nor ſhould it be objected, that there have been many men who daily ſpend fifteen or ſixteen hours in ſtudy; for by ſome of whom this is reported, it has never been done; others have done it for a ſhort time only; and of the reſt it appears, that they employed their minds in ſuch operations as required neither celerity nor ſtrength, in the low drudgery of collating copies, comparing authorities, digeſting dictionaries, or accumulating compilations.

Men of ſtudy and imagination are frequently upbraided by the induſtrious and plodding ſons of care, with paſſing too great a part of their life in a ſtate of inaction.

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inaction. But theſe defiers of ſleep ſeem not to remember, that though it muſt be granted them that they are crawling about before the break of day, it can ſeldom be ſaid that they are perfectly awake; they exhauſt no ſpirits, and require no repairs; but lie torpid as a toad in marble, or at leaſt are known to live only by an inert and ſluggiſh loco-motive faculty, and may be ſaid, like a wounded ſnake, to 'drag their ſlow length along.'

Man has been long known among philoſophers, by the appellation of the microcoſm, or epitome of the world: the reſemblance between the great and little world might, by a rational obſerver, be detailed to many particulars; and to many more by a fanciful ſpeculatiſt. I know not in which of theſe two claſſes I ſhall be ranged for obſerving, that as the total quantity of light and darkneſs allotted in the courſe of the year to every region of the earth is the ſame, though diſtributed at various times and in different portions; ſo perhaps, to each individual of the human ſpecies, nature has ordained the ſame quantity of wakefulneſs and ſleep; though divided by ſome into a total quieſcence and vigorous exertion of their faculties, and blended by others in a kind of twilight of exiſtence, in a ſtate between dreaming and reaſoning, in which they either think without action, or act without thought.

The poets are generally well affected to ſleep: as men who think with vigour, they require reſpite from thought; and gladly reſign themſelves to that gentle power, who not only beſtows reſt, but frequently leads them to happier regions, where patrons are always kind, and audiences are always candid, where they are feaſted in the bowers of imagination, and crowned with flowers

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diveſted of their prickles, and laurels of unfading verdure.

The more refined and penetrating part of mankind, who take wide ſurveys of the wilds of life, who ſee the innumerable terrors and diſtreſſes that are perpetually preying on the heart of man, and diſcern with unhappy perſpicuity, calamities yet latent in their cauſes, are glad to cloſe their eyes upon the gloomy proſpect, and loſe in a ſhort inſenſibility the remembrance of others miſeries and their own. The hero has no higher hope, than that, after having routed legions after legions, and added kingdom to kingdom, he ſhall retire to milder happineſs, and cloſe his days in ſocial feſtivity. The wit or the ſage can expect no greater happineſs, than that, after having haraſſed his reaſon in deep reſearches, and fatigued his fancy in boundleſs excurſions, he ſhall ſink at night in the tranquillity of ſleep.

The poets, among all thoſe that enjoy the bleſſings of ſleep, have been leaſt aſhamed to acknowledge their benefactor. How much *Statius* conſidered the evils of life as aſſuaged and ſoftened by the balm of ſlumber, we may diſcover by that pathetic invocation, which he poured out in his waking nights: and that *Cowley*, among the other felicities of his darling ſolitude, did not forget to number the privilege of ſleeping without diſturbance, we may learn from the rank that he aſſigns among the gifts of nature to the poppy, 'which is ſcattered,' ſays he, 'over the fields of corn, that all the needs of man may be eaſily ſatisfied, and that bread and ſleep may be found together.'

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Si quis inviſum Cereri benignæ
Me putat germen, vehementer errat;
Illa me in partem recipit libenter
Fertilis agri.

Meque frumentumque ſimul per omnes
Conſulens mundo Dea ſpargit oras;
Creſcite, O! dixit, duo magna ſuſten-
tacula vitæ.

Carpe, mortalis, mea dona lætus,
Carpe, nec plantas alias require,
Sed ſatur panis, ſatur et ſoporis,
Cætera ſperne.

He wildly errs who thinks I yield
Precedence in the well-cloth'd field,
Tho' mix'd with wheat I grow:
Indulgent Ceres knew my worth,
And to adorn the teeming earth,
She bade the Poppy blow.

Nor vainly gay the ſight to pleaſe,
But bleſt with power mankind to eaſe,
The goddeſs ſaw me riſe:
'Thrive with the life-ſupporting grain,'
She cry'd, 'the ſolace of the ſwain,
The cordial of his eyes.

'Seize, happy mortal, ſeize the good;
My hand ſupplies thy ſleep and food,
And makes thee truly bleſt:
With plenteous meals enjoy the day,
In ſlumbers paſs the night away,
And leave to fate the reſt.'

C. B.

Sleep

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Sleep, therefore, as the chief of all earthly bleſſings, is juſtly appropriated to induſtry, and temperance; the refreſhing reſt, and the peaceful night, are the portion only of him who lies down weary with honeſt labour, and free from the fumes of indigeſted luxury; it is the juſt doom of lazineſs and gluttony, to be inactive without eaſe, and drowſy without tranquillity.

Sleep has been often mentioned as the image of death; 'ſo like it,' ſays Sir *Thomas Brown*, 'that I dare not truſt it without my prayers:' their reſemblance is, indeed, apparent and ſtriking; they both, when they ſeize the body, leave the ſoul at liberty: and wiſe is he that remembers of both, that they can be ſafe and happy only by virtue.

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NUMB. 41. TUESDAY, *March* 27, 1753.

——Si mutabile pectus
Eſt tibi, conſiliis, non curribus, utere noſtris,
Dum potes; et ſolidis etiamnum ſedibus adſtas;
Dumque male optatos nondum premis inſcius axes. OVID.

——Th' attempt forſake,
And not my chariot but my counſel take;
While yet ſecurely on the earth you ſtand;
Nor touch the horſes with too raſh a hand. ADDISON.

To the ADVENTURER.

SIR, *Fleet, March* 24.

I NOW ſend you the ſequel of my ſtory; which had not been ſo long delayed, if I could have brought myſelf to imagine, that any real impatience was felt for the fate of *Miſargyrus*; who has travelled no unbeaten track to miſery, and conſequently can preſent the reader only with ſuch incidents as occur in daily life.

You have ſeen me, Sir, in the zenith of my glory, not diſpenſing the kindly warmth of an all-cheering ſun; but, like another Phaëton, ſcorching and blaſting every thing round me. I ſhall proceed, therefore, to finiſh my career, and paſs as rapidly as poſſible through the remaining viciſſitudes of my life.

When I firſt began to be in want of money, I made no doubt of an immediate ſupply. The newspapers were

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were perpetually offering directions to men, who ſeemed to have no other buſineſs than to gather heaps of gold for thoſe who place their ſupreme felicity in ſcattering it. I poſted away, therefore, to one of theſe advertiſers, who by his propoſals ſeemed to deal in thouſands; and was not a little chagrined to find, that this general benefactor would have nothing to do with any larger ſum than thirty pounds, nor would venture that without a joint note from myſelf and a reputable houſekeeper, or for a longer time than three months.

It was not yet ſo bad with me, as that I needed to ſolicit ſurety for thirty pounds: yet partly from the greedineſs that extravagance always produces, and partly from a deſire of ſeeing the humour of a petty uſurer, a character of which I had hitherto lived in ignorance, I condeſcended to liſten to his terms. He proceeded to inform me of my great felicity in not falling into the hands of an extortioner; and aſſured me, that I ſhould find him extremely moderate in his demands: he was not, indeed, certain, that he could furniſh me with the whole ſum, for people were at this particular time extremely preſſing and importunate for money; yet as I had the appearance of a gentleman, he would try what he could do, and give me his anſwer in three days.

At the expiration of the time, I called upon him again; and was again informed of the great demand for money, and that, "money was money now:" he then adviſed me to be punctual in my payment, as that might induce him to befriend me hereafter; and delivered me the money, deducting at the rate of five

and

and thirty *per cent.* with another panegyrick upon his own moderation.

I will not tire you with the various practices of uſurious oppreſſion; but cannot omit my tranſaction with *Squeeze* on *Tower-hill*, who finding me a young man of conſiderable expectations, employed an agent to perſuade me to borrow five hundred pounds, to be refunded by an annual payment of twenty *per cent.* during the joint lives of his daughter *Nancy Squeeze* and myſelf. The negociator came prepared to inforce his propoſal with all his art; but finding that I caught his offer with the eagerneſs of neceſſity, he grew cold and languid; "he had mentioned it out of kindneſs; he "would try to ſerve me: Mr. *Squeeze* was an honeſt "man, but extremely cautious." In three days he came to tell me, that his endeavours had been ineffectual, Mr. *Squeeze* having no good opinion of my life: but that there was one expedient remaining; Mrs. *Squeeze* could influence her huſband, and her good will might be gained by a compliment. I waited that afternoon on Mrs. *Squeeze*, and poured out before her the flatteries which uſually gain acceſs to rank and beauty: I did not then know, that there are places in which the only compliment is a bribe. Having yet credit with a jeweller, I afterwards procured a ring of thirty guineas, which I humbly preſented, and was ſoon admitted to a treaty with Mr. *Squeeze*. He appeared peeviſh and backward, and my old friend whiſpered me, that he would never make a dry bargain: I, therefore, invited him to a tavern. Nine times we met on the affair; nine times I paid four pounds for the ſupper and claret; and nine guineas I gave the agent

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agent for good offices. I then obtained the money, paying ten *per cent.* advance; and at the tenth meeting gave another ſupper, and diſburſed fifteen pounds for the writings.

Others who ſtiled themſelves brokers, would only truſt their money upon goods: that I might, therefore, try every art of expenſive folly, I took a houſe and furniſhed it. I amuſed myſelf with deſpoiling my moveables of their gloſſy appearance, for fear of alarming the lender with ſuſpicions; and in this I ſucceeded ſo well, that he favoured me with one hundred and ſixty pounds upon that which was rated at ſeven hundred. I then found that I was to maintain a guardian about me to prevent the goods from being broken or removed. This was, indeed, an unexpected tax; but it was too late to recede; and I comforted myſelf, that I might prevent a creditor, of whom I had ſome apprehenſions, from ſeizing, by having a prior execution always in the houſe.

By ſuch means I had ſo embarraſſed myſelf, that my whole attention was engaged in contriving excuſes, and raiſing ſmall ſums to quiet ſuch as words would no longer mollify. It coſt me eighty pounds in preſents to Mr. *Leech* the attorney, for his forbearance of one hundred, which he ſolicited me to take when I had no need. I was perpetually haraſſed with importunate demands, and inſulted by wretches, who a few months before would not have dared to raiſe their eyes from the duſt before me. I lived in continual terror, frighted by every noiſe at the door, and terrified at the approach of every ſtep quicker than common. I never retired to reſt, without feeling the juſtneſs of the Spaniſh proverb,

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verb, "Let him who ſleeps too much, borrow the "pillow of a debtor;" my ſolicitude and vexation kept me long waking; and when I had cloſed my eyes, I was purſued or inſulted by viſionary bailiffs.

When I reflected upon the meanneſs of the ſhifts I had reduced myſelf to, I could not but curſe the folly and extravagance that had overwhelmed me in a ſea of troubles, from which it was highly improbable that I ſhould ever emerge. I had ſome time lived in hopes of an eſtate, at the death of my uncle; but he diſappointed me by marrying his houſekeeper; and, catching an opportunity ſoon after of quarrelling with me, for ſettling twenty pounds a year upon a girl whom I had ſeduced, told me that he would take care to prevent his fortune from being ſquandered upon proſtitutes.

Nothing now remained, but the chance of extricating myſelf by marriage; a ſcheme which, I flattered myſelf, nothing but my preſent diſtreſs would have made me think on with patience. I determined, therefore, to look out for a tender novice, with a large fortune, at her own diſpoſal; and accordingly fixed my eyes upon Miſs *Biddy Simper*. I had now paid her ſix or ſeven viſits; and ſo fully convinced her of my being a gentleman and a rake, that I made no doubt that both her perſon and fortune would be ſoon mine.

At this critical time, Miſs *Gripe* called upon me, in a chariot bought with my money, and loaded with trinkets that I had in my days of affluence laviſhed on her. Thoſe days were now over; and there was little hope that they would ever return. She was not able to withſtand the temptation of ten pounds that *Talon* the bailiff offered her, but brought him into my apartment

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ment disguised in a livery; and taking my sword to the window, under pretence of admiring the workmanship, beckoned him to seize me.

Delay would have been expensive without use, as the debt was too considerable for payment or bail: I, therefore, suffered myself to be immediately conducted to jail.

Vestibulum ante ipsum primisque in faucibus Orci,
Luctus & ultrices posuêre cubilia curæ:
Pallentesque habitant morbi, tristisque senectus,
Et metus, et malesuada fames, et turpis egestas. VIRG.

Just in the gate and in the jaws of hell,
Revengeful cares and sullen sorrows dwell;
And pale diseases, and repining age;
Want, fear, and famine's unresisted rage. DRYDEN.

Confinement of any kind is dreadful; a prison is sometimes able to shock those, who endure it in a good cause: let your imagination, therefore, acquaint you, with what I have not words to express, and conceive, if possible, the horrors of imprisonment attended with reproach and ignominy, of involuntary association with the refuse of mankind, with wretches who were before too abandoned for society, but being now freed from shame or fear are hourly improving their vices by consorting with each other.

There are, however, a few, whom like myself imprisonment has rather mortified than hardened: with these only I converse; and of these you may perhaps hereafter receive some account from

Your humble servant, MISARGYRUS.

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NUMB. 45. TUESDAY, *April* 10, 1753*.

Nulla fides regni ſociis, omniſque poteſtas
Impatiens conſortis erit. LUCAN.

No faith of partnerſhip dominion owns:
Still diſcord hovers o'er divided thrones.

IT is well known, that many things appear plauſible in ſpeculation, which can never be reduced to practice; and that of the numberleſs projects that have flattered mankind with theoretical ſpecioufneſs, few have ſerved any other purpoſe than to ſhow the ingenuity of their contrivers. A voyage to the moon, however romantick and abſurd the ſcheme may now appear, ſince the properties of air have been better underſtood, ſeemed highly probable to many of the aſpiring wits in the laſt century, who began to doat upon their gloſſy plumes, and fluttered with impatience for the hour of their departure:

——— *Pereant veſtigia mille*
Ante fugam, abſentemque ferit gravis ungula campum.

Hills, vales, and floods appear already croſt;
And, ere he ſtarts, a thouſand ſteps are loſt. POPE.

Among the fallacies which only experience can detect, there are ſome, of which ſcarcely experience itſelf can deſtroy the influence; ſome which, by a captivat-

* The firſt ſketch of this paper may be ſeen in *Boſwell's* Life of Johnſon, vol. i. p. 178. C.

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ing ſhow of indubitable certainty, are perpetually gaining upon the human mind; and which, though every trial ends in diſappointment, obtain new credit as the ſenſe of miſcarriage wears gradually away, perſuade us to try again what we have tried already, and expoſe us by the ſame failure to double vexation.

Of this tempting, this deluſive kind, is the expectation of great performances by confederated ſtrength. The ſpeculatiſt, when he has carefully obſerved how much may be performed by a ſingle band, calculates by a very eaſy operation the force of thouſands, and goes on accumulating power till reſiſtance vaniſhes before it; then rejoices in the ſucceſs of his new ſcheme, and wonders at the folly or idleneſs of former ages, who have lived in want of what might ſo readily be procured, and ſuffered themſelves to be debarred from happineſs by obſtacles which one united effort would have ſo eaſily ſurmounted.

But this gigantick phantom of collective power vaniſhes at once into air and emptineſs, at the firſt attempt to put it into action. The different apprehenſions, the diſcordant paſſions, the jarring intereſts of men, will ſcarcely permit that many ſhould unite in one undertaking.

Of a great and complicated deſign, ſome will never be brought to diſcern the end; and of the ſeveral means by which it may be accompliſhed, the choice will be a perpetual ſubject of debate, as every man is ſwayed in his determination by his own knowledge or convenience. In a long ſeries of action ſome will languiſh with fatigue, and ſome be drawn off by preſent gratifications; ſome will loiter becauſe others labour, and ſome will

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ceaſe to labour becauſe others loiter: and if once they come within proſpect of ſucceſs and profit, ſome will be greedy and others envious; ſome will undertake more than they can perform, to enlarge their claims of advantage; ſome will perform leſs than they undertake, leſt their labours ſhould chiefly turn to the benefit of others.

The hiſtory of mankind informs us that a ſingle power is very ſeldom broken by a confederacy. States of different intereſts, and aſpects malevolent to each other, may be united for a time by common diſtreſs; and in the ardour of ſelf-preſervation fall unanimouſly upon an enemy, by whom they are all equally endangered. But if their firſt attack can be withſtood, time will never fail to diſſolve their union: ſucceſs and miſcarriage will be equally deſtructive: after the conqueſt of a province, they will quarrel in the diviſion; after the loſs of a battle, all will be endeavouring to ſecure themſelves by abandoning the reſt.

From the impoſſibility of confining numbers to the conſtant and uniform proſecution of a common intereſt, ariſes the difficulty of ſecuring ſubjects againſt the encroachment of governors. Power is always gradually ſtealing away from the many to the few, becauſe the few are more vigilant and conſiſtent; it ſtill contracts to a ſmaller number, till in time it centers in a ſingle perſon.

Thus all the forms of governments inſtituted among mankind, perpetually tend towards monarchy; and power, however diffuſed through the whole community, is by negligence or corruption, commotion or diſtreſs, repoſed at laſt in the chief magiſtrate.

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"There never appear," ſays *Swift*, "more than "five or ſix men of genius in an age; but if they were "united, the world could not ſtand before them." It is happy, therefore, for mankind, that of this union there is no probability. As men take in a wider compaſs of intellectual ſurvey, they are more likely to chuſe different objects of purſuit; as they ſee more ways to the ſame end, they will be leſs eaſily perſuaded to travel together; as each is better qualified to form an independent ſcheme of private greatneſs, he will reject with greater obſtinacy the project of another; as each is more able to diſtinguiſh himſelf as the head of a party, he will leſs readily be made a follower or an aſſociate.

The reigning philoſophy informs us, that the vaſt bodies which conſtitute the univerſe, are regulated in their progreſs through the ethereal ſpaces, by the perpetual agency of contrary forces; by one of which they are reſtrained from deſerting their orbits, and loſing themſelves in the immenſity of heaven; and held off by the other from ruſhing together, and cluſtering round their center with everlaſting coheſion.

The ſame contrariety of impulſe may be perhaps diſcovered in the motions of men: we are formed for ſociety, not for combination; we are equally unqualified to live in a cloſe connexion with our fellow-beings, and in total ſeparation from them; we are attracted towards each other by general ſympathy, but kept back from contact by private intereſts.

Some philoſophers have been fooliſh enough to imagine, that improvements might be made in the ſyſtem of the univerſe, by a different arrangement of the

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the orbs of heaven; and politicians, equally ignorant and equally preſumptuous, may eaſily be led to ſuppoſe, that the happineſs of our world would be promoted by a different tendency of the human mind. It appears, indeed, to a ſlight and ſuperficial obſerver, that many things impracticable in our preſent ſtate, might be eaſily effected, if mankind were better diſpoſed to union and cooperation: but a little reflection will diſcover, that if confederacies were eaſily formed, they would loſe their efficacy, ſince numbers would be oppoſed to numbers, and unanimity to unanimity; and inſtead of the preſent petty competitions of individuals or ſingle families, multitudes would be ſupplanting multitudes, and thouſands plotting againſt thouſands.

There is no claſs of the human ſpecies, of which the union ſeems to have been more expected, than of the learned: the reſt of the world have almoſt always agreed to ſhut ſcholars up together in colleges and cloiſters; ſurely not without hope, that they would look for that happineſs in concord, which they were debarred from finding in variety; and that ſuch conjunctions of intellect would recompenſe the munificence of founders and patrons, by performances above the reach of any ſingle mind.

But diſcord, who found means to roll her apple into the banqueting chamber of the goddeſſes, has had the addreſs to ſcatter her laurels in the ſeminaries of learning. The friendſhip of ſtudents and of beauties is for the moſt part equally ſincere, and equally durable: as both depend for happineſs on the regard of others, on that of which the value ariſes merely from compariſon,

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they are both expoſed to perpetual jealouſies, and both inceſſantly employed in ſchemes to intercept the praiſes of each other.

I am, however, far from intending to inculcate that this confinement of the ſtudious to ſtudious companions, has been wholly without advantage to the publick: neighbourhood, where it does not conciliate friendſhip, incites competition; and he that would contentedly reſt in a lower degree of excellence, where he had no rival to dread, will be urged by his impatience of inferiority to inceſſant endeavours after great attainments.

Theſe ſtimulations of honeſt rivalry are, perhaps, the chief effects of academies and ſocieties; for whatever be the bulk of their joint labours, every ſingle piece is always the production of an individual, that owes nothing to his colleagues but the contagion of diligence, a reſolution to write, becauſe the reſt are writing, and the ſcorn of obſcurity while the reſt are illuſtrious.

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NUMB. 50. SATURDAY, *April* 28, 1753.

Quicunque turpi fraude ſemel innotuit,
Etiamſi vera dici, amittit fidem. PHÆD.

The wretch that often has deceiv'd,
Though truth he ſpeaks, is ne'er believ'd.

WHEN *Ariſtotle* was once aſked, what a man could gain by uttering falſehoods? he replied, "Not to be "credited when he ſhall tell the truth."

The character of a liar is at once ſo hateful and contemptible, that even of thoſe who have loſt their virtue it might be expected that from the violation of truth they ſhould be reſtrained by their pride. Almoſt every other vice that diſgraces human nature, may be kept in countenance by applauſe and aſſociation: the corrupter of virgin innocence ſees himſelf envied by the men, and at leaſt not deteſted by the women: the drunkard may eaſily unite with beings, devoted like himſelf to noiſy merriments or ſilent inſenſibility, who will celebrate his victories over the novices of intemperance, boaſt themſelves the companions of his proweſs, and tell with rapture of the multitudes whom unſucceſsful emulation has hurried to the grave: even the robber and the cut-throat have their followers, who admire their addreſs and intrepidity, their ſtratagems of rapine, and their fidelity to the gang.

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The liar, and only the liar, is invariably and univerſally deſpiſed, abandoned, and diſowned: he has no domeſtick conſolations, which he can oppoſe to the cenſure of mankind; he can retire to no fraternity, where his crimes may ſtand in the place of virtues; but is given np to the hiſſes of the multitude, without friend and without apologiſt. It is the peculiar condition of falſehood, to be equally deteſted by the good and bad: "The devils," ſays Sir *Thomas Brown*, "do "not tell lies to one another; for truth is neceſſary to "all ſocieties: nor can the ſociety of hell ſubſiſt with-"out it."

It is natural to expect, that a crime thus generally deteſted ſhould be generally avoided; at leaſt, that none ſhould expoſe himſelf to unabated and unpitied infamy, without an adequate temptation; and that to guilt ſo eaſily detected, and ſo ſeverely puniſhed, an adequate temptation would not readily be found.

Yet ſo it is, that in defiance of cenſure and contempt, truth is frequently violated; and ſcarcely the moſt vigilant and unremitted circumſpection will ſecure him that mixes with mankind, from being hourly deceived by men of whom it can ſcarcely be imagined, that they mean any injury to him or profit to themſelves; even where the ſubject of converſation could not have been expected to put the paſſions in motion, or to have excited either hope or fear, or zeal or malignity, ſufficient to induce any man to put his reputation in hazard, however little he might value it, or to overpower the love of truth, however weak might be its influence.

The caſuiſts have very diligently diſtinguiſhed lies into

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into their ſeveral claſſes, acccording to their various degrees of malignity: but they have, I think, generally omitted that which is moſt common, and perhaps, not leaſt miſchievous; which, ſince the moraliſts have not given it a name, I ſhall diſtinguiſh as the *lie* of *vanity*.

To vanity may juſtly be imputed moſt of the falſehoods, which every man perceives hourly playing upon his ear, and, perhaps, moſt of thoſe that are propagated with ſucceſs. To the lie of commerce, and the lie of malice, the motive is ſo apparent, that they are ſeldom negligently or implicitly received: ſuſpicion is always watchful over the practices of intereſt; and whatever the hope of gain, or deſire of miſchief, can prompt one man to aſſert, another is by reaſons equally cogent incited to refute. But vanity pleaſes herſelf with ſuch ſlight gratifications, and looks forward to pleaſure ſo remotely conſequential, that her practices raiſe no alarm, and her ſtratagems are not eaſily diſcovered.

Vanity is, indeed, often ſuffered to paſs unpurſued by ſuſpicion, becauſe he that would watch her motions, can never be at reſt: fraud and malice are bounded in their influence; ſome opportunity of time and place is neceſſary to their agency; but ſcarce any man is abſtracted one moment from his vanity; and he, to whom truth affords no gratifications, is generally inclined to ſeek them in falſehoods.

It is remarked by Sir *Kenelm Digby*, "that every "man has a deſire to appear ſuperior to others, though "it were only in having ſeen what they have not ſeen." Such an accidental advantage, ſince it neither implies merit, nor confers dignity, one would think ſhould not be deſired ſo much as to be counterfeited: yet even this

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this vanity, trifling as it is, produces innumerable narratives, all equally falſe; but more or leſs credible in proportion to the ſkill or confidence of the relater. How many may a man of diffuſive converſation count among his acquaintances, whoſe lives have been ſignalized by numberleſs eſcapes; who never croſs the river but in a ſtorm, or take a journey into the country without more adventures than befel the knights-errant of ancient times in pathleſs foreſts or enchanted caſtles! How many muſt he know, to whom portents and prodigies are of daily occurrence; and for whom nature is hourly working wonders inviſible to every other eye, only to ſupply them with ſubjects of converſation!

Others there are that amuſe themſelves with the diſſemination of falſehood, at greater hazard of detection and diſgrace; men marked out by ſome lucky planet for univerſal confidence and friendſhip, who have been conſulted in every difficulty, intruſted with every ſecret, and ſummoned to every tranſaction: it is the ſupreme felicity of theſe men, to ſtun all companies with noiſy information; to ſtill doubt, and overbear oppoſition, with certain knowledge or authentick intelligence. A liar of this kind, with a ſtrong memory or briſk imagination, is often the oracle of an obſcure club, and, till time diſcovers his impoſtures, dictates to his hearers with uncontrouled authority; for if a publick queſtion be ſtarted, he was preſent at the debate; if a new faſhion be mentioned, he was at court the firſt day of its appearance; if a new performance of literature draws the attention of the publick, he has patroniſed the author, and ſeen his work in manuſcript: if a criminal of eminence be condemned to die, he often predicted

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dicted his fate, and endeavoured his reformation: and who that lives at a diſtance from the ſcene of action, will dare to contradict a man, who reports from his own eyes and ears, and to whom all perſons and affairs are thus intimately known?

This kind of falſehood is generally ſucceſsful for a time, becauſe it is practiſed at firſt with timidity and caution: but the proſperity of the liar is of ſhort duration; the reception of one ſtory is always an incitement to the forgery of another leſs probable; and he goes on to triumph over tacit credulity, till pride or reaſon riſes up againſt him, and his companions will no longer endure to ſee him wiſer than themſelves.

It is apparent, that the inventors of all theſe fictions intend ſome exaltation of themſelves, and are led off by the purſuit of honour from their attendance upon truth: their narratives always imply ſome conſequence in favour of their courage, their ſagacity, or their activity, their familiarity with the learned, or their reception among the great; they are always bribed by the preſent pleaſure of ſeeing themſelves ſuperior to thoſe that ſurround them, and receiving the homage of ſilent attention and envious admiration.

But vanity is ſometimes excited to fiction by leſs viſible gratifications: the preſent age abounds with a race of liars who are content with the conſciouſneſs of falſehood, and whoſe pride is to deceive others without any gain or glory to themſelves. Of this tribe it is the ſupreme pleaſure to remark a lady in the playhouſe or the park, and to publiſh, under the character of a man ſuddenly enamoured, an advertiſement in the news of the next day, containing a minute deſcription of her perſon

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perſon and her dreſs. From this artifice, however, no other effect can be expected, than perturbations which the writer can never ſee, and conjectures of which he never can be informed: ſome miſchief, however, he hopes he has done; and to have done miſchief, is of ſome importance. He ſets his invention to work again, and produces a narrative of a robbery or a murder, with all the circumſtances of time and place accurately adjuſted. This is a jeſt of greater effect and longer duration: if he fixes his ſcene at a proper diſtance, he may for ſeveral days keep a wife in terror for her huſband, or a mother for her ſon; and pleaſe himſelf with reflecting, that by his abilities and addreſs ſome addition is made to the miſeries of life.

There is, I think, an ancient law of *Scotland*, by which *leaſing-making* was capitally puniſhed. I am, indeed, far from deſiring to increaſe in this kingdom the number of executions; yet I cannot but think, that they who deſtroy the confidence of ſociety, weaken the credit of intelligence, and interrupt the ſecurity of life; haraſs the delicate with ſhame, and perplex the timorous with alarms; might very properly be awakened to a ſenſe of their crimes, by denunciations of a whipping-poſt or pillory: ſince many are ſo inſenſible of right and wrong, that they have no ſtandard of action but the law; nor feel guilt, but as they dread puniſhment.

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NUMB. 53. TUESDAY, *May* 8, 1753.

Quiſque ſuos patimur Manes. VIRG.
Each has his lot, and bears the fate he drew.

SIR, *Fleet, May* 6.

IN conſequence of my engagements, I addreſs you once more from the habitations of miſery. In this place, from which buſineſs and pleaſure are equally excluded, and in which our only employment and diverſion is to hear the narratives of each other, I might much ſooner have gathered materials for a letter, had I not hoped to have been reminded of my promiſe; but ſince I find myſelf placed in the regions of oblivion, where I am no leſs neglected by you than by the reſt of mankind, I reſolved no longer to wait for ſolicitation, but ſtole early this evening from between gloomy ſullenneſs and riotous merriment, to give you an account of part of my companions.

One of the moſt eminent members of our club is Mr. *Edward Scamper*, a man of whoſe name the Olympick heroes would not have been aſhamed. *Ned* was born to a ſmall eſtate, which he determined to improve; and therefore, as ſoon as he became of age, mortgaged part of his land to buy a mare and ſtallion, and bred horſes for the courſe. He was at firſt very ſucceſsful, and gained ſeveral of the king's plates, as he is now every day boaſting, at the expenſe of very little more

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more than ten times their value. At laſt, however, he diſcovered, that victory brought him more honour than profit: reſolving, therefore, to be rich as well as illuſtrious, he repleniſhed his pockets by another mortgage, became on a ſudden a daring better, and reſolving not to truſt a jockey with his fortune, rode his horſe himſelf, diſtanced two of his competitors the firſt heat, and at laſt won the race, by forcing his horſe on a deſcent to full ſpeed at the hazard of his neck. His eſtate was thus repaired, and ſome friends that had no ſouls adviſed him to give over; but *Ned* now knew the way to riches, and therefore without caution increaſed his expenſes. From this hour he talked and dreamed of nothing but a horſerace; and riſing ſoon to the ſummit of equeſtrian reputation, he was conſtantly expected on every courſe, divided all his time between lords and jockeys, and, as the unexperienced regulated their bets by his example, gained a great deal of money by laying openly on one horſe and ſecretly on the other. *Ned* was now ſo ſure of growing rich, that he involved his eſtate in a third mortgage, borrowed money of all his friends, and riſked his whole fortune upon *Bay Lincoln*. He mounted with beating heart, ſtarted fair, and won the firſt heat; but, in the ſecond, as he was puſhing againſt the foremoſt of his rivals, his girth broke, his ſhoulder was diſlocated, and before he was diſmiſſed by the ſurgeon, two bailiffs faſtened upon him, and he ſaw *Newmarket* no more. His daily amuſement for four years has been to blow the ſignal for ſtarting, to make imaginary matches, to repeat the pedigree of *Bay Lincoln*, and to form reſolutions againſt truſting another groom with the choice of his girth.

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The next in ſeniority is Mr. *Timothy Snug*, a man of deep contrivance and impenetrable ſecrecy. His father died with the reputation of more wealth than he poſſeſſed: *Tim*, therefore, entered the world with a reputed fortune of ten thouſand pounds. Of this he very well knew that eight thouſand was imaginary: but being a man of refined policy, and knowing how much honour is annexed to riches, he reſolved never to detect his own poverty; but furniſhed his houſe with elegance, ſcattered his money with profuſion, encouraged every ſcheme of coſtly pleaſure, ſpoke of petty loſſes with negligence, and on the day before an execution entered his doors, had proclaimed at a publick table his reſolution to be jolted no longer in a hackney coach.

Another of my companions is the magnanimous *Jack Scatter*, the ſon of a country gentleman, who having no other care than to leave him rich, conſidered that literature could not be had without expenſe; maſters would not teach for nothing; and when a book was bought and read, it would ſell for little. *Jack* was, therefore, taught to read and write by the butler; and when his acquiſition was made, was left to paſs his days in the kitchen and the ſtable, where he heard no crime cenſured but covetouſneſs and diſtruſt of poor honeſt ſervants, and where all the praiſe was beſtowed on good houſekeeping, and a free heart. At the death of his father, *Jack* ſet himſelf to retrieve the honour of his family: he abandoned his cellar to the butler, ordered his groom to provide hay and corn at diſcretion, took his houſekeeper's word for the expenſes of the kitchen, allowed all his ſervants to do their work by deputies, permitted his domeſticks to keep his houſe open

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open to their relations and acquaintance, and in ten years was conveyed hither, without having purchaſed, by the loſs of his patrimony either honour or pleaſure, or obtained any other gratification than that of having corrupted the neighbouring villagers by luxury and idleneſs.

Dick Serge was a draper in Cornhill, and paſſed eight years in proſperous diligence, without any care but to keep his books, or any ambition but to be in time an alderman: but then, by ſome unaccountable revolution in his underſtanding, he became enamoured of wit and humour, deſpiſed the converſation of pedlars and ſtock-jobbers, and rambled every night to the regions of gayety, in queſt of company ſuited to his taſte. The wits at firſt flocked about him for ſport, and afterwards for intereſt; ſome found their way into his books, and ſome into his pockets; the man of adventure was equipped from his ſhop for the purſuit of a fortune; and he had ſometimes the honour to have his ſecurity accepted when his friends were in diſtreſs. Elated with theſe aſſociations, he ſoon learned to neglect his ſhop; and having drawn his money out of the funds, to avoid the neceſſity of teaſing men of honour for trifling debts, he has been forced at laſt to retire hither, till his friends can procure him a poſt at court.

Another that joins in the ſame meſs is *Bob Cornice*, whoſe life has been ſpent in fitting up a houſe. About ten years ago *Bob* purchaſed the country habitation of a bankrupt: the mere ſhell of a building; *Bob* holds no great matter; the inſide is the teſt of elegance. Of this houſe he was no ſooner maſter than he ſummoned twenty workmen to his aſſiſtance, tore up the floors and laid them anew, ſtripped off the wainſcot, drew the windows

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windows from their frames, altered the diſpoſition of doors and fire-places, and caſt the whole fabrick into a new form: his next care was to have his ceilings painted, his pannels gilt, and his chimney-pieces carved: every thing was executed by the ableſt hands: *Bob*'s buſineſs was to follow the workmen with a microſcope, and call upon them to retouch their performances, and heighten excellence to perfection. The reputation of his houſe now brings round him a daily confluence of viſitants, and every one tells him of ſome elegance which he has hitherto overlooked, ſome convenience not yet procured, or ſome new mode in ornament or furniture. *Bob*, who had no wiſh but to be admired, nor any guide but the faſhion, thought every thing beautiful in proportion as it was new, and conſidered his work as unfiniſhed, while any obſerver could ſuggeſt an addition; ſome alteration was therefore every day made, without any other motive than the charms of novelty. A traveller at laſt ſuggeſted to him the convenience of a grotto: *Bob* immediately ordered the mount of his garden to be excavated; and having laid out a large ſum in ſhells and minerals, was buſy in regulating the diſpoſition of the colours and luſtres, when two gentlemen, who had aſked permiſſion to ſee his gardens, preſented him a writ, and led him off to leſs elegant apartments.

I know not, Sir, whether among this fraternity of ſorrow you will think any much to be pitied; nor indeed do many of them appear to ſolicit compaſſion, for they generally applaud their own conduct, and deſpiſe thoſe whom want of taſte or ſpirit ſuffers to grow rich. It were happy if the priſons of the kingdom were filled

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only with characters like theſe, men whom proſperity could not make uſeful, and whom ruin cannot make wiſe: but there are among us many who raiſe different ſenſations, many that owe their preſent miſery to the ſeductions of treachery, the ſtrokes of caſualty, or the tenderneſs of pity; many whoſe ſufferings diſgrace ſociety, and whoſe virtues would adorn it: of theſe, when familiarity ſhall have enabled me to recount their ſtories without horror, you may expect another narrative from,

SIR,

Your moſt humble ſervant,

MYSARGYRUS.

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NUMB. 58. SATURDAY, *May* 25, 1753.

Damnant quod non intelligunt. CIC.

They condemn what they do not underſtand.

EURIPIDES, having preſented *Socrates* with the writings of *Heraclitus*, a philoſopher famed for involution and obſcurity, inquired afterwards his opinion of their merit. "What I underſtand," ſaid *Socrates*, "I find to be excellent; and, therefore, believe that to be of equal value which I cannot underſtand."

The reflection of every man who reads this paſſage will ſuggeſt to him the difference between the practice of *Socrates*, and that of modern criticks: *Socrates*, who had, by long obſervation upon himſelf and others, diſcovered the weakneſs of the ſtrongeſt, and the dimneſs of the moſt enlightened intellect, was afraid to decide haſtily in his own favour, or to conclude that an author had written without meaning, becauſe he could not immediately catch his ideas; he knew that the faults of books are often more juſtly imputable to the reader, who ſometimes wants attention, and ſometimes penetration; whoſe underſtanding is often obſtructed by prejudice, and often diſſipated by remiſſneſs; who comes ſometimes to a new ſtudy, unfurniſhed with knowledge previouſly neceſſary; and finds difficulties

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inſuperable, for want of ardour ſufficient to encounter them.

Obſcurity and clearneſs are relative terms: to ſome readers ſcarce any book is eaſy, to others not many are difficult: and ſurely they, whom neither any exuberant praiſe beſtowed by others, nor any eminent conqueſts over ſtubborn problems, have entitled to exalt themſelves above the common orders of mankind, might condeſcend to imitate the candour of *Socrates*; and where they find inconteſtible proofs of ſuperior genius, be content to think that there is juſtneſs in the connection which they cannot trace, and cogency in the reaſoning which they cannot comprehend.

This diffidence is never more reaſonable than in the peruſal of the authors of antiquity; of thoſe whoſe works have been the delight of ages, and tranſmitted as the great inheritance of mankind from one generation to another: ſurely, no man can, without the utmoſt arrogance, imagine that he brings any ſuperiority of underſtanding to the peruſal of theſe books which have been preſerved in the devaſtation of cities, and ſnatched up from the wreck of nations; which thoſe who fled before barbarians have been careful to carry off in the hurry of migration, and of which barbarians have repented the deſtruction. If in books thus made venerable by the uniform atteſtation of ſucceſſive ages, any paſſages ſhall appear unworthy of that praiſe which they have formerly received, let us not immediately determine, that they owed their reputation to dullneſs or bigotry; but ſuſpect at leaſt that our anceſtors had ſome reaſons for their opinions, and that our ignorance of thoſe reaſons makes us differ from them.

It

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It often happens that an author's reputation is endangered in ſucceeding times, by that which raiſed the loudeſt applauſe among his cotemporaries: nothing is read with greater pleaſure than alluſions to recent facts, reigning opinions, or preſent controverſies; but when facts are forgotten, and controverſies extinguiſhed, theſe favourite touches loſe all their graces; and the author in his deſcent to poſterity muſt be left to the mercy of chance, without any power of aſcertaining the memory of thoſe things, to which he owed his luckieſt thoughts and his kindeſt reception.

On ſuch occaſions, every reader ſhould remember the diffidence of *Socrates*, and repair by his candour the injuries of time; he ſhould impute the ſeeming defects of his author to ſome chaſm of intelligence, and ſuppoſe that the ſenſe which is now weak was once forcible, and the expreſſion which is now dubious formerly determinate.

How much the mutilation of ancient hiſtory has taken away from the beauty of poetical performances, may be conjectured from the light which a lucky commentator ſometimes effuſes, by the recovery of an incident that had been long forgotten: thus, in the third book of *Horace*, *Juno*'s denunciations againſt thoſe that ſhould preſume to raiſe again the walls of *Troy*, could for many ages pleaſe only by ſplendid images and ſwelling language, of which no man diſcovered the uſe or propriety, till *Le Fevre*, by ſhewing on what occaſion the Ode was written, changed wonder to rational delight. Many paſſages yet undoubtedly remain in the ſame author, which an exacter know-

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ledge of the incidents of his time would clear from objections. Among theſe I have always numbered the following lines;

Aurum per medios ire ſatellites,
Et perrumpere amat ſaxa, potentius
Ictu fulmineo. Concidit Auguris
Argivi domus ob lucrum
Demerſa excidio. Diffidit urbium
Portas vir Macedo, et ſubruit æmulos
Reges muneribus, Munera navium
Sævos illaqueant duces,

Stronger than thunder's winged force,
All-powerful gold can ſpread its courſe,
Thro' watchful guards its paſſage make,
And loves thro' ſolid walls to break:
From gold the overwhelming woes,
That cruſh'd the Grecian augur roſe:
Philip with gold thro' cities broke,
And rival monarchs felt his yoke;
Captains of ſhips to gold are ſlaves,
Tho' fierce as their own winds and waves. FRANCIS.

The cloſe of this paſſage, by which every reader is now diſappointed and offended, was probably the delight of the *Roman* court: it cannot be imagined, that *Horace*, after having given to gold the force of thunder, and told of its power to ſtorm cities and to conquer kings, would have concluded his account of its efficacy with its influence over naval commanders, had he not alluded to ſome fact then current in the mouths of men, and therefore more intereſting for a time than the

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the conqueſts of Philip. Of the like kind may be reckoned another ſtanza in the ſame book:

——— Juſſa coram non ſine conſcio
Surgit marito, ſeu vocat inſtitor
Seu navis Hiſpanæ magiſter
Dedecorum pretioſus emptor.

The conſcious huſband bids her riſe,
When ſome rich factor courts her charms,
Who calls the wanton to his arms,
And, prodigal of wealth and fame,
Profuſely buys the coſtly ſhame. FRANCIS.

He has little knowledge of *Horace* who imagines that the *factor*, or the *Spaniſh merchant*, are mentioned by chance: there was undoubtedly ſome popular ſtory of an intrigue, which thoſe names recalled to the memory of his reader.

The flame of his genius in other parts, though ſomewhat dimmed by time, is not totally eclipſed; his addreſs and judgment yet appear, though much of the ſpirit and vigour of his ſentiment is loſt: this has happened to the twentieth Ode of the firſt book;

Vile potabis modicis Sabinum
Cantharis, Græcâ quod ego ipſe teſtâ
Conditum levi; datus in theatro
Cùm tibi plauſus,
Chare Mæcenas eques. Ut paterni
Fluminis ripæ, ſimul et jocoſa
Redderet laudes tibi Vaticani
Montis imago.

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A poet's beverage humbly cheap,
(Should great Mæcenas be my gueſt)
The vintage of the Sabine grape,
But yet in ſober cups ſhall crown the feaſt:
'Twas rack'd into a Grecian caſk,
Its rougher juice to melt away;
I ſeal'd it too—a pleaſing taſk!
With annual joy to mark the glorious day,
When in applauſive ſhouts thy name
Spread from the theatre around,
Floating on thy own Tiber's ſtream,
And Echo, playful nymph, return'd the ſound.

FRANCIS.

We here eaſily remark the intertexture of a happy compliment with an humble invitation; but certainly are leſs delighted than thoſe, to whom the mention of the applauſe beſtowed upon Mæcenas, gave occaſion to recount the actions or words that produced it.

Two lines which have exerciſed the ingenuity of modern criticks, may, I think, be reconciled to the judgment, by an eaſy ſuppoſition: *Horace* thus addreſſes Agrippa;

Scriberis Vario fortis, et hoſtium
Victor, Mæonii carminis alite.

Varius, a *ſwan of Homer's wing,*
Shall brave Agrippa's conqueſts ſing.

That *Varius* ſhould be called "A bird of *Homeric* "ſong," appears ſo harſh to modern ears, that an emendation of the text has been propoſed: but ſurely the learning of the ancients had been long ago oblite-

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rated, had every man thought himſelf at liberty to corrupt the lines which he did not underſtand. If we imagine that *Varius* had been by any of his cotemporaries celebrated under the appellation of *Muſarum Ales,* the ſwan of the Muſes, the language of *Horace* becomes graceful and familiar; and that ſuch a compliment was at leaſt poſſible, we know from the transformation feigned by *Horace* of himſelf.

The moſt elegant compliment that was paid to *Addiſon,* is of this obſcure and periſhable kind;

> When panting Virtue her laſt efforts made,
> You brought your CLIO to the virgin's aid.

Theſe lines muſt pleaſe as long as they are underſtood; but can be underſtood only by thoſe that have obſerved *Addiſon*'s ſignatures in the *Spectator.*

The nicety of theſe minute alluſions I ſhall exemplify by another inſtance, which I take this occaſion to mention, becauſe, as I am told, the commentators have omitted it. *Tibullus* addreſſes *Cynthia* in this manner;

> *Te ſpectem, ſuprema mihi cùm venerit hora,*
> *Te teneam moriens deficiente manu.*
>
> Before my cloſing eyes dear *Cynthia* ſtand,
> Held weakly by my fainting trembling hand.

To theſe lines *Ovid* thus refers in his elegy on the death of *Tibullus:*

Cynthia

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Cynthia decedens, felicius, inquit, amata
Sum tibi; vixiſti dum tuus ignis eram,
Cui Nemeſis, quid, ait, tibi ſunt mea damna dolori?
Me tenuit moriens deficiente manu.

Bleſt was my reign, retiring Cynthia cry'd:
Not till he left my breaſt, Tibullus dy'd.
Forbear, ſaid Nemeſis, my loſs to moan,
The fainting trembling hand was mine alone.

The beauty of this paſſage, which conſiſts in the appropriation made by *Nemeſis* of the line originally directed to *Cynthia*, had been wholly imperceptible to ſucceeding ages, had chance, which has deſtroyed ſo many greater volumes, deprived us likewiſe of the poems of *Tibullus*.

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NUMB. 62, SATURDAY, *June* 9, 1753.

O fortuna viris, invida fortibus
Quam non æqua bonis præmia dividis. SENECA.

Capricious Fortune ever joys,
With partial hand to deal the prize,
To cruſh the brave and cheat the wiſe.

To the ADVENTURER.

SIR, *Fleet, June* 6.

To the account of ſuch of my companions as are impriſoned without being miſerable, or are miſerable without any claim to compaſſion; I promiſed to add the hiſtories of thoſe, whoſe virtue has made them unhappy, or whoſe misfortunes are at leaſt without a crime. That this catalogue ſhould be very numerous, neither you nor your readers ought to expect; "rari "quippe boni;" "the good are few." Virtue is uncommon in all the claſſes of humanity; and I ſuppoſe it will ſcarcely be imagined more frequent in a priſon than in other places.

Yet in theſe gloomy regions is to be found the tenderneſs, the generoſity, the philanthrophy of *Serenus*, who might have lived in competence and eaſe, if he could have looked without emotion on the miſeries of another.

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another. *Serenus* was one of thoſe exalted minds, whom knowledge and ſagacity could not make ſuſpicious; who poured out his ſoul in boundleſs intimacy, and thought community of poſſeſſions the law of friendſhip. The friend of *Serenus* was arreſted for debt, and after many endeavours to ſoften his creditor, ſent his wife to ſolicit that aſſiſtance which never was refuſed. The tears and importunity of female diſtreſs were more than was neceſſary to move the heart of *Serenus*; he haſted immediately away, and conferring a long time with his friend, found him confident that if the preſent preſſure was taken off, he ſhould ſoon be able to reeſtabliſh his affairs. *Serenus*, accuſtomed to believe, and afraid to aggravate diſtreſs, did not attempt to detect the fallacies of hope, nor reflect that every man overwhelmed with calamity believes, that if that was removed he ſhall immediately be happy; he, therefore, with little heſitation offered himſelf as ſurety.

In the firſt raptures of eſcape all was joy, gratitude, and confidence; the friend of *Serenus* diſplayed his proſpects, and counted over the ſums of which he ſhould infallibly be maſter before the day of payment. *Serenus* in a ſhort time began to find his danger, but could not prevail with himſelf to repent of beneficence; and therefore ſuffered himſelf ſtill to be amuſed with projects which he durſt not conſider, for fear of finding them impracticable. The debtor, after he had tried every method of raiſing money which art or indigence could prompt, wanted either fidelity or reſolution to ſurrender himſelf to priſon, and left *Serenus* to take his place.

Serenus

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Serenus has often propoſed to the creditor, to pay him whatever he ſhall appear to have loſt by the flight of his friend; but however reaſonable this propoſal may be thought, avarice and brutality have been hitherto inexorable, and *Serenus* ſtill continues to languiſh in priſon.

In this place, however, where want makes almoſt every man ſelfiſh, or deſperation gloomy, it is the good fortune of *Serenus* not to live without a friend: he paſſes moſt of his hours in the converſation of *Candidus*, a man whom the ſame virtuous ductility has, with ſome difference of circumſtances, made equally unhappy. *Candidus*, when he was young, helpleſs, and ignorant, found a patron that educated, protected, and ſupported him: his patron being more vigilant for others than himſelf, left at his death an only ſon, deſtitute and friendleſs. *Candidus* was eager to repay the benefits he had received; and having maintained the youth for a few years at his own houſe, afterwards placed him with a merchant of eminence, and gave bonds to a great value as a ſecurity for his conduct.

The young man, removed too early from the only eye of which he dreaded the obſervation, and deprived of the only inſtruction which he heard with reverence, ſoon learned to conſider virtue as reſtraint, and reſtraint as oppreſſion; and to look with a longing eye at every expence to which he could not reach, and every pleaſure which he could not partake: by degrees he deviated from his firſt regularity, and unhappily mingling among young men buſy in diſſipating the gains of their fathers

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fathers induſtry, he forgot the precepts of *Candidus*, ſpent the evening in parties of pleaſure, and the morning in expedients to ſupport his riots. He was, however, dextrous and active in buſineſs; and his maſter, being ſecured againſt any conſequences of diſhoneſty, was very little ſolicitous to inſpect his manners, or to enquire how he paſſed thoſe hours, which were not immediately devoted to the buſineſs of his profeſſion: when he was informed of the young man's extravagance or debauchery, "let his bondſman look to that," ſaid he, "I have taken care of myſelf."

Thus the unhappy ſpendthrift proceeded from folly to folly, and from vice to vice, with the connivance if not the encouragement of his maſter; till in the heat of a nocturnal revel he committed ſuch violences in the ſtreet as drew upon him a criminal proſecution. Guilty and unexperienced, he knew not what courſe to take; to confeſs his crime to *Candidus*, and ſolicit his interpoſition, was little leſs dreadful than to ſtand before the frown of a court of juſtice. Having, therefore, paſſed the day with anguiſh in his heart and diſtraction in his looks, he ſeized at night a very large ſum of money in the compting houſe, and ſetting out he knew not whither, was heard of no more.

The conſequence of his flight was the ruin of *Candidus*; ruin ſurely undeſerved and irreproachable, and ſuch as the laws of a juſt government ought either to prevent or repair: nothing is more inequitable than that one man ſhould ſuffer for the crimes of another, for crimes which he neither prompted nor permitted, which he could neither foreſee nor prevent. When

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we conſider the weakneſs of human reſolutions and the inconſiſtency of human conduct, it muſt appear abſurd that one man ſhall engage for another, that he will not change his opinions or alter his conduct.

It is, I think, worthy of conſideration, whether, ſince no wager is binding without a poſſibility of loſs on each ſide, it is not equally reaſonable, that no contract ſhould be valid without reciprocal ſtipulations: but in this caſe, and others of the ſame kind, what is ſtipulated on his ſide to whom the bond is given? he takes advantage of the ſecurity, neglects his affairs, omits his duty, ſuffers timorous wickedneſs to grow daring by degrees, permits appetite to call for new gratifications, and, perhaps, ſecretly longs for the time in which he ſhall have power to ſeize the forfeiture: and if virtue or gratitude ſhould prove too ſtrong for temptation, and a young man perſiſt in honeſty, however inſtigated by his paſſions, what can ſecure him at laſt againſt a falſe accuſation? I for my part always ſhall ſuſpect, that he who can by ſuch methods ſecure his property, will go one ſtep farther to increaſe it: nor can I think that man ſafely truſted with the means of miſchief, who, by his deſire to have them in his hands, gives an evident proof how much leſs he values his neighbour's happineſs than his own.

Another of our companions is *Lentulus*, a man whoſe dignity of birth was very ill ſupported by his fortune. As ſome of the firſt offices in the kingdom were filled by his relations, he was early invited to court, and encouraged by careſſes and promiſes to attendance and ſolicitation: a conſtant appearance in ſplendid

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ſplendid company neceſſarily required magnificence of dreſs; and a frequent participation of faſhionable amuſements forced him into expence: but theſe meaſures were requiſite to his ſucceſs; ſince every body knows, that to be loſt to ſight is to be loſt to remembrance, and that he who deſires to fill a vacancy, muſt be always at hand, leſt ſome man of greater vigilance ſhould ſtep in before him.

By this courſe of life his little fortune was every day made leſs: but he received ſo many diſtinctions in publick, and was known to reſort ſo familiarly to the houſes of the great, that every man looked on his preferment as certain, and believed that its value would compenſate for its ſlowneſs: he, therefore, found no difficulty in obtaining credit for all that his rank or his vanity made neceſſary: and, as ready payment was not expected, the bills were proportionably enlarged, and the value of the hazard or delay were adjuſted ſolely by the equity of the creditor. At length death deprived *Lentulus* of one of his patrons, and a revolution in the miniſtry of another; ſo that all his proſpects vaniſhed at once, and thoſe that had before encouraged his expences, began to perceive that their money was in danger: there was now no other contention but who ſhould firſt ſeize upon his perſon, and, by forcing immediate payment, delivered him up naked to the vengeance of the reſt. In purſuance of this ſcheme, one of them invited him to a tavern, and procured him to be arreſted at the door; but *Lentulus* inſtead of endeavouring ſecretly to pacify him by payment, gave notice to the reſt, and offered to divide amongſt them

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them the remnant of his fortune: they feaſted ſix hours at his expenſe, to deliberate on his propoſal; and at laſt determined, that, as he could not offer more than five ſhillings in the pound, it would be more prudent to keep him in priſon, till he could procure from his relations the payment of his debts.

Lentulus is not the only man confined within theſe walls, on the ſame account: the like procedure, upon the like motives, is common among men whom yet the law allows to partake the uſe of fire and water with the compaſſionate and the juſt; who frequent the aſſemblies of commerce in open day, and talk with deteſtation and contempt of highwaymen or houſe-breakers: but, ſurely, that man muſt be confeſſedly robbed, who is compelled, by whatever means, to pay the debts which he does not owe; nor can I look with equal hatred upon him, who, at the hazard of his life, holds out his piſtol and demands my purſe, as on him who plunders under ſhelter of the law, and by detaining my ſon or my friend in priſon, extorts from me the price of their liberty. No man can be more an enemy to ſociety than he, by whoſe machinations our virtues are turned to our diſadvantage; he is leſs deſtructive to mankind that plunders cowardice, than he that preys upon compaſſion.

I believe, Mr. *Adventurer*, you will readily confeſs, that though not one of theſe, if tried before a commercial judicature, can be wholly acquitted from imprudence or temerity; yet that, in the eye of all who can conſider virtue as diſtinct from wealth, the fault

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of two of them, at leaſt, is outweighed by the merit; and that of the third is ſo much extenuated by the circumſtances of his life, as not to deſerve a perpetual priſon: yet muſt theſe, with multitudes equally blameleſs, languiſh in confinement, till malevolence ſhall relent, or the law be changed.

I am, SIR,

Your humble Servant,

MISARGYRUS.

NUMB. 67. TUESDAY, *June* 26, 1753.

Inventas——vitam excoluere per artes. VIRG.

They poliſh life by uſeful arts.

THAT familiarity produces neglect, has been long obſerved. The effect of all external objects, however great or ſplendid, ceaſes with their novelty; the courtier ſtands without emotion in the royal preſence; the ruſtick tramples under his foot the beauties of the ſpring with little attention to their colours or their fragrance; and the inhabitant of the coaſt darts his eye upon the immenſe diffuſion of waters, without awe, wonder, or terrour.

Thoſe who have paſt much of their lives in this great city, look upon its opulence and its multitudes, its extent

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tent and variety, with cold indifference; but an inhabitant of the remoter parts of the kingdom is immediately diſtinguiſhed by a kind of diſſipated curioſity, a buſy endeavour to divide his attention amongſt a thouſand objects, and a wild confuſion of aſtoniſhment and alarm.

The attention of a new comer is generally firſt ſtruck by the multiplicity of cries that ſtun him in the ſtreets, and the variety of merchandize and manufactures which the ſhopkeepers expoſe on every hand; and he is apt, by unwary burſts of admiration, to excite the merriment and contempt of thoſe who miſtake the uſe of their eyes for effects of their underſtanding, and confound accidental knowledge with juſt reaſoning.

But, ſurely, theſe are ſubjects on which any man may without reproach employ his meditations: the innumerable occupations, among which the thouſands that ſwarm in the ſtreets of *London*, are diſtributed, may furniſh employment to minds of every caſt, and capacities of every degree. He that contemplates the extent of this wonderful city, finds it difficult to conceive, by what method plenty is maintained in our markets, and how the inhabitants are regularly ſupplied with the neceſſaries of life; but when he examines the ſhops and warehouſes, ſees the immenſe ſtores of every kind of merchandize piled up for ſale, and runs over all the manufactures of art and products of nature, which are every where attracting his eye and ſoliciting his purſe, he will be inclined to conclude, that ſuch quantities cannot eaſily be exhauſted, and that part of mankind muſt ſoon ſtand ſtill for want of employment, till the wares already provided ſhall be worn out and deſtroyed.

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As *Socrates* was paſſing through the fair at *Athens*, and caſting his eyes over the ſhops and cuſtomers, 'how 'many things are here,' ſays he, 'that I do not want!' The ſame ſentiment is every moment riſing in the mind of him that walks the ſtreets of *London*, however inferior in philoſophy to *Socrates*: he beholds a thouſand ſhops crowded with goods, of which he can ſcarcely tell the uſe, and which, therefore, he is apt to conſider as of no value: and, indeed many of the arts by which families are ſupported, and wealth is heaped together, are of that minute and ſuperfluous kind, which nothing but experience could evince poſſible to be proſecuted with advantage, and which, as the world might eaſily want, it could ſcarcely be expected to encourage.

But ſo it is, that cuſtom, curioſity, or wantonneſs, ſupplies every art with patrons, and finds purchaſers for every manufacture; the world is ſo adjuſted, that not only bread, but riches may be obtained without great abilities, or arduous performances: the moſt unſkilful hand and unenlightened mind have ſufficient incitements to induſtry; for he that is reſolutely buſy, can ſcarcely be in want. There is, indeed, no employment, however deſpicable, from which a man may not promiſe himſelf more than competence, when he ſees thouſands and myriads raiſed to dignity, by no other merit than that of contributing to ſupply their neighbours with the means of ſucking ſmoke through a tube of clay; and others raiſing contributions upon thoſe, whoſe elegance diſdains the groſſneſs of ſmoky luxury, by grinding the ſame materials into a powder that may at once gratify and impair the ſmell.

Not

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Not only by theſe popular and modiſh trifles, but by a thouſand unheeded and evaneſcent kinds of buſineſs, are the multitudes of this city preſerved from idleneſs, and conſequently from want. In the endleſs variety of taſtes and circumſtances that diverſify mankind, nothing is ſo ſuperfluous, but that ſome one deſires it; or ſo common, but that ſome one is compelled to buy it. As nothing is uſeleſs but becauſe it is in improper hands, what is thrown away by one is gathered up by another; and the refuſe of part of mankind furniſhes a ſubordinate claſs with the materials neceſſary to their ſupport.

When I look round upon thoſe who are thus variouſly exerting their qualifications, I cannot but admire the ſecret concatenation of ſociety that links together the great and the mean, the illuſtrious and the obſcure; and conſider with benevolent ſatisfaction, that no man, unleſs his body or mind be totally diſabled, has need to ſuffer the mortification of ſeeing himſelf uſeleſs or burthenſome to the community: he that will diligently labour, in whatever occupation, will deſerve the ſuſtenance which he obtains, and the protection which he enjoys; and may lie down every night with the pleaſing conſciouſneſs, of having contributed ſomething to the happineſs of life.

Contempt and admiration are equally incident to narrow minds: he whoſe comprehenſion can take in the whole ſubordination of mankind, and whoſe perſpicacity can pierce to the real ſtate of things through the thin veils of fortune or of faſhion, will diſcover meanneſs in the higheſt ſtations, and dignity in the

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meaneſt; and find that no man can become venerable but by virtue, or contemptible but by wickedneſs.

In the midſt of this univerſal hurry, no man ought to be ſo little influenced by example, or ſo void of honeſt emulation, as to ſtand a lazy ſpectator of inceſſant labour; or pleaſe himſelf with the mean happineſs of a drone, while the active ſwarms are buzzing about him: no man is without ſome quality, by the due application of which he might deſerve well of the world; and whoever he be that has but little in his power, ſhould be in haſte to do that little, leſt he be confounded with him that can do nothing.

By this general concurrence of endeavours, arts of every kind have been ſo long cultivated, that all the wants of man may be immediately ſupplied; idleneſs can ſcarcely form a wiſh which ſhe may not gratify by the toil of others, or curioſity dream of a toy, which the ſhops are not ready to afford her.

Happineſs is enjoyed only in proportion as it is known; and ſuch is the ſtate or folly of man, that it is known only by experience of its contrary: we who have long lived amidſt the conveniencies of a town immenſely populous, have ſcarce an idea of a place where deſire cannot be gratified by money. In order to have a juſt ſenſe of this artificial plenty, it is neceſſary to have paſſed ſome time in a diſtant colony, or thoſe parts of our iſland which are thinly inhabited: he that has once known how many trades every man in ſuch ſituations is compelled to exerciſe, with how much labour the products of nature muſt be accommodated to human uſe, how long the loſs or defect of any common utenſil muſt

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muſt be endured, or by what awkward expedients it muſt be ſupplied, how far men may wander with money in their hands before any can ſell them what they wiſh to buy, will know how to rate at its proper value the plenty and eaſe of a great city.

But that the happineſs of man may ſtill remain imperfect, as wants in this place are eaſily ſupplied, new wants likewiſe are eaſily created: every man, in ſurveying the ſhops of *London*, ſees numberleſs inſtruments and conveniencies, of which, while he did not know them, he never felt the need; and yet, when uſe has made them familiar, wonders how life could be ſupported without them. Thus it comes to paſs, that our deſires always increaſe with our poſſeſſions; the knowledge that ſomething remains yet unenjoyed, impairs our enjoyment of the good before us.

They who have been accuſtomed to the refinements of ſcience, and multiplications of contrivance, ſoon loſe their confidence in the unaſſiſted powers of nature, forget the paucity of our real neceſſities, and overlook the eaſy methods by which they may be ſupplied. It were a ſpeculation worthy of a philoſophical mind, to examine how much is taken away from our native abilities, as well as added to them, by artificial expedients. We are ſo accuſtomed to give and receive aſſiſtance, that each of us ſingly can do little for himſelf; and there is ſcarce any one among us, however contracted may be his form of life, who does not enjoy the labour of a thouſand artiſts.

But a ſurvey of the various nations that inhabit the earth will inform us, that life may be ſupported with leſs aſſiſtance; and that the dexterity, which practice

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enforced by neceſſity produces, is able to effect much by very ſcanty means. The nations of *Mexico* and *Peru* erected cities and temples without the uſe of iron; and at this day the rude *Indian* ſupplies himſelf with all the neceſſaries of life: ſent like the reſt of mankind naked into the world, as ſoon as his parents have nurſed him up to ſtrength, he is to provide by his own labour for his own ſupport. His firſt care is to find a ſharp flint among the rocks; with this he undertakes to fell the trees of the foreſt; he ſhapes his bow, heads his arrows, builds his cottage, and hollows his canoe, and from that time lives in a ſtate of plenty and proſperity; he is ſheltered from the ſtorms, he is fortified againſt beaſts of prey, he is enabled to purſue the fiſh of the ſea, and the deer of the mountains; and as he does not know, does not envy the happineſs of poliſhed nations, where gold can ſupply the want of fortitude and ſkill, and he whoſe laborious anceſtors have made him rich, may lie ſtretched upon a couch, and ſee all the treaſures of all the elements poured down before him.

This picture of a ſavage life, if it ſhows how much individuals may perform, ſhows likewiſe how much ſociety is to be deſired. Though the perſeverance and addreſs of the *Indian* excite our admiration, they nevertheleſs cannot procure him the conveniencies which are enjoyed by the vagrant beggar of a civilized country: he hunts like a wild beaſt to ſatisfy his hunger: and when he lies down to reſt after a ſucceſsful chaſe, cannot pronounce himſelf ſecure againſt the danger of periſhing in a few days; he is, perhaps, content with his

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his condition, becauſe he knows not that a better is attainable by man; as he that is born blind does not long for the perception of light, becauſe he cannot conceive the advantages which light would afford him; but hunger, wounds and wearineſs are real evils, though he believes them equally incident to all his fellow-creatures; and when a tempeſt compels him to lie ſtarving in his hut, he cannot juſtly be concluded equally happy with thoſe whom art has exempted from the power of chance, and who make the foregoing year provide for the following.

To receive and to communicate aſſiſtance, conſtitutes the happineſs of human life: man may, indeed, preſerve his exiſtence in ſolitude, but can enjoy it only in ſociety; the greateſt underſtanding of an individual, doomed to procure food and clothing for himſelf, will barely ſupply him with expedients to keep off death from day to day; but as one of a large community performing only his ſhare of the common buſineſs, he gains leiſure for intellectual pleaſures, and enjoys the happineſs of reaſon and reflection.

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NUMB. 69. TUESDAY, *July* 3, 1753.

Ferè libenter homines id quod volunt credunt. CÆSAR.

Men willingly believe what they wiſh to be true.

TULLY has long ago obſerved, that no man, however weakened by long life, is ſo conſcious of his own decrepitude, as not to imagine that he may yet hold his ſtation in the world for another year.

Of the truth of this remark every day furniſhes new confirmation: there is no time of life, in which men for the moſt part ſeem leſs to expect the ſtroke of death, than when every other eye ſees it impending; or are more buſy in providing for another year, than when it is plain to all but themſelves, that at another year they cannot arrive. Though every funeral that paſſes before their eyes evinces the deceitfulneſs of ſuch expectations, ſince every man who is born to the grave thought himſelf equally certain of living at leaſt to the next year; the ſurvivor ſtill continues to flatter himſelf, and is never at a loſs for ſome reaſon why his life ſhould be protracted, and the voracity of death continued to be pacified with ſome other prey.

But this is only one of the innumerable artifices practiſed in the univerſal conſpiracy of mankind againſt themſelves: every age and every condition indulges ſome darling fallacy; every man amuſes himſelf with projects which he knows to be improbable, and which, therefore,

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therefore, he reſolves to purſue without daring to examine them. Whatever any man ardently deſires, he very readily believes that he ſhall ſome time attain: he whoſe intemperance has overwhelmed him with diſeaſes, while he languiſhes in the ſpring, expects vigour and recovery from the ſummer ſun; and while he melts away in the ſummer, transfers his hopes to the froſts of winter: he that gazes upon elegance or pleaſure, which want of money hinders him from imitating or partaking, comforts himſelf that the time of diſtreſs will ſoon be at an end, and that every day brings him nearer to a ſtate of happineſs; though he knows it has paſſed not only without acquiſition of advantage, but perhaps without endeavours after it, in the formation of ſchemes that cannot be executed, and in the contemplation of proſpects which cannot be approached.

Such is the general dream in which we all ſlumber out our time: every man thinks the day coming, in which he ſhall be gratified with all his wiſhes, in which he ſhall leave all thoſe competitors behind, who are now rejoicing like himſelf in the expectation of victory; the day is always coming to the ſervile in which they ſhall be powerful, to the obſcure in which they ſhall be eminent, and to the deformed in which they ſhall be beautiful.

If any of my readers has looked with ſo little attention on the world about him, as to imagine this repreſentation exaggerated beyond probability, let him reflect a little upon his own life; let him conſider what were his hopes and proſpects ten years ago, and what additions he then expected to be made by ten years

to

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to his happineſs: thoſe years are now elapſed; have they made good the promiſe that was extorted from them, have they advanced his fortune, enlarged his knowledge, or reformed his conduct, to the degree that was once expected? I am afraid, every man that recollects his hopes, muſt confeſs his diſappointment; and own that day has glided unprofitably after day, and that he is ſtill at the ſame diſtance from the point of happineſs.

With what conſolations can thoſe, who have thus miſcarried in their chief deſign, elude the memory of their ill ſucceſs? with what amuſements can they pacify their diſcontent, after the loſs of ſo large a portion of life? they can give themſelves up again to the ſame deluſions, they can form new ſchemes of airy gratifications, and fix another period of felicity; they can again reſolve to truſt the promiſe which they know will be broken, they can walk in a circle with their eyes ſhut, and perſuade themſelves to think that they go forward.

Of every great and complicated event, part depends upon cauſes out of our power, and part muſt be effected by vigour and perſeverance. With regard to that which is ſtyled in common language the work of chance, men will always find reaſons for confidence or diſtruſt, according to their different tempers or inclinations; and he that has been long accuſtomed to pleaſe himſelf with poſſibilities of fortuitous happineſs, will not eaſily or willingly be reclaimed from his miſtake. But the effects of human induſtry and ſkill are more eaſily ſubjected to calculation: whatever can be completed in a year, is diviſible into parts, of which each may

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may be performed in the compaſs of a day; he, therefore, that has paſſed the day without attention to the taſk aſſigned him, may be certain that the lapſe of life has brought him no nearer to his object; for whatever idleneſs may expect from time, its produce will be only in proportion to the diligence with which it has been uſed. He that floats lazily down the ſtream, in purſuit of ſomething born along by the ſame current, will find himſelf indeed move forward; but unleſs he lays his hand to the oar, and increaſes his ſpeed by his own labour, muſt be always at the ſame diſtance from that which he is following.

There have happened in every age ſome contingencies of unexpected and undeſerved ſucceſs, by which thoſe who are determined to believe whatever favours their inclinations, have been encouraged to delight themſelves with future advantages; they ſupport confidence by conſiderations, of which the only proper uſe is to chaſe away deſpair: it is equally abſurd to ſit down in idleneſs becauſe ſome have been enriched without labour, as to leap a precipice becauſe ſome have fallen and eſcaped with life, or to put to ſea in a ſtorm becauſe ſome have been driven from a wreck upon the coaſt to which they are bound.

We are all ready to confeſs, that belief ought to be proportioned to evidence or probability: let any man, therefore, compare the number of thoſe who have been thus favoured by fortune, and of thoſe who have failed of their expectations, and he will eaſily determine, with what juſtneſs he has regiſtered himſelf in the lucky catalogue.

But there is no need on theſe occaſions for deep inquiries

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inquiries or laborious calculations; there is a far eaſier method of diſtinguiſhing the hopes of folly from thoſe of reaſon, of finding the difference between proſpects that exiſt before the eyes, and thoſe that are only painted on a fond imagination. *Tom Drowſy* had accuſtomed himſelf to compute the profit of a darling project till he had no longer any doubt of its ſucceſs; it was at laſt matured by cloſe conſideration, all the meaſures were accurately adjuſted, and he wanted only five hundred pounds to become maſter of a fortune that might be envied by a director of a trading company. *Tom* was generous and grateful, and was reſolved to recompenſe this ſmall aſſiſtance with an ample fortune: he, therefore, deliberated for a time, to whom amongſt his friends he ſhould declare his neceſſities; not that he ſuſpected a refuſal, but becauſe he could not ſuddenly determine which of them would make the beſt uſe of riches, and was, therefore, moſt worthy of his favour. At laſt his choice was ſettled; and knowing that in order to borrow he muſt ſhow the probability of repayment, he prepared for a minute and copious explanation of his project. But here the golden dream was at an end: he ſoon diſcovered the impoſſibility of impoſing upon others the notions by which he had ſo long impoſed upon himſelf; which way ſoever he turned his thoughts, impoſſibility and abſurdity aroſe in oppoſition on every ſide; even credulity and prejudice were at laſt forced to give way, and he grew aſhamed of crediting himſelf what ſhame would not ſuffer him to communicate to another.

To this teſt let every man bring his imaginations, before they have been too long predominant in his mind.

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Whatever is true will bear to be related, whatever is rational will endure to be explained; but when we delight to brood in ſecret over future happineſs, and ſilently to employ our meditations upon ſchemes of which we are conſcious that the bare mention would expoſe us to deriſion and contempt; we ſhould then remember, that we are cheating ourſelves by voluntary deluſions; and giving up to the unreal mockeries of fancy, thoſe hours in which ſolid advantages might be attained by ſober thought and rational aſſiduity.

There is, indeed, ſo little certainty in human affairs, that the moſt cautious and ſevere examiner may be allowed to indulge ſome hopes which he cannot prove to be much favoured by probability; ſince after his utmoſt endeavours to aſcertain events, he muſt often leave the iſſue in the hands of chance. And ſo ſcanty is our preſent allowance of happineſs, that in many ſituations life could ſcarcely be ſupported, if hope were not allowed to relieve the preſent hour by pleaſures borrowed from futurity; and reanimate the languor of dejection to new efforts, by pointing to diſtant regions of felicity, which yet no reſolution or perſeverance ſhall ever reach.

But theſe, like all other cordials, though they may invigorate in a ſmall quantity, intoxicate in a greater; theſe pleaſures, like the reſt, are lawful only in certain circumſtances, and to certain degrees; they may be uſeful in a due ſubſerviency to nobler purpoſes, but become dangerous and deſtructive when once they gain the aſcendant in the heart: to ſoothe the mind to tranquillity by hope, even when that hope is likely to deceive us, may be ſometimes uſeful; but to lull our faculties in a lethargy, is poor and deſpicable.

Vices

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Vices and errors are differently modified, according to the ſtate of the minds to which they are incident; to indulge hope beyond the warrant of reaſon, is the failure alike of mean and elevated underſtandings; but its foundation and its effects are totally different: the man of high courage and great abilities is apt to place too much confidence in himſelf, and to expect from a vigorous exertion of his powers more than ſpirit or diligence can attain: between him and his wiſh he ſees obſtacles indeed, but he expects to overleap or break them, his miſtaken ardour hurries him forward; and though perhaps he miſſes his end, he nevertheleſs obtains ſome collateral good, and performs ſomething uſeful to mankind and honourable to himſelf.

The drone of timidity preſumes likewiſe to hope, but without ground and without conſequence; the bliſs with which he ſolaces his hours, he always expects from others, though very often he knows not from whom: he folds his arms about him, and ſits in expectation of ſome revolution in the ſtate that ſhall raiſe him to greatneſs, or ſome golden ſhower that ſhall load him with wealth; he dozes away the day in muſing upon the morrow; and at the end of life is rouſed from his dream only to diſcover that the time of action is paſt, and that he can now ſhow his wiſdom only by repentance.

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NUMB. 74. SATURDAY, *July* 21, 1753.

Insanientis dum sapientiæ
Consultus erro. HOR.

I miſt my end, and loſt my way,
By crack-brain'd wiſdom led aſtray.

To the ADVENTURER.

SIR,

IT has long been charged by one part of mankind upon the other, that they will not take advice; that counſel and inſtruction are generally thrown away; and that, in defiance both of admonition and example, all claim the right to chooſe their own meaſures, and to regulate their own lives.

That there is ſomething in advice very uſeful and ſalutary, ſeems to be equally confeſſed on all hands: ſince even thoſe that reject it, allow for the moſt part that rejection to be wrong, but charge the fault upon the unſkilful manner in which it is given; they admit the efficacy of the medicine, but abhor the nauſeouſneſs of the vehicle.

Thus mankind have gone on from century to century: ſome have been adviſing others how to act, and ſome have been teaching the adviſers how to adviſe; yet very little alteration has been made in the world. As we muſt all by the law of nature enter life in ignorance, we muſt all make our way through it by the light of

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our own experience; and, for any ſecurity that advice has been yet able to afford, muſt endeavour after ſucceſs at the hazard of miſcarriage, and learn to do right by venturing to do wrong.

By advice I would not be underſtood to mean, the everlaſting and invariable principles of moral and religious truth, from which no change of external circumſtances can juſtify any deviation; but ſuch directions as reſpect merely the prudential part of conduct, and which may be followed or neglected without any violation of eſſential duties.

It is, indeed, not ſo frequently to make us good as to make us wiſe, that our friends employ the officiouſneſs of counſel; and among the rejectors of advice, who are mentioned by the grave and ſententious with ſo much acrimony, you will not ſo often find the vicious and abandoned, as the pert and the petulant, the vivacious and the giddy.

As the great end of female education is to get a huſband, this likewiſe is the general ſubject of female advice: and the dreadful denunciation againſt thoſe volatile girls, who will not liſten patiently to the lectures of wrinkled wiſdom, is, that they will die unmarried, or throw themſelves away upon ſome worthleſs fellow, who will never be able to keep them a coach.

I being naturally of a ductile and eaſy temper, without ſtrong deſires or quick reſentments, was always a favourite amongſt the elderly ladies, becauſe I never rebelled againſt ſeniority, nor could be charged with thinking myſelf wiſe before my time; but heard every opinion with ſubmiſſive ſilence, profeſſed myſelf ready to learn from all who ſeemed inclined to teach me, paid

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paid the ſame grateful acknowledgments for precepts contradictory to each other, and if any controverſy aroſe, was careful to ſide with her who preſided in the company.

Of this compliance I very early found the advantage; for my aunt Matilda left me a very large addition to my fortune, for this reaſon chiefly, as ſhe herſelf declared, becauſe I was not above hearing good counſel, but would ſit from morning till night to be inſtructed, while my ſiſter Sukey, who was a year younger than myſelf, and was, therefore, in greater want of information, was ſo much conceited of her own knowledge, that whenever the good lady in the ardour of benevolence reproved or inſtructed her, ſhe would pout or titter, interrupt her with queſtions, or embarraſs her with objections.

I had no deſign to ſupplant my ſiſter by this complaiſant attention; nor, when the conſequence of my obſequiouſneſs came to be known, did Sukey ſo much envy as deſpiſe me: I was, however, very well pleaſed with my ſucceſs; and having received, from the concurrent opinion of all mankind, a notion, that to be rich was to be great and happy, I thought I had obtained my advantages at an eaſy rate, and reſolved to continue the ſame paſſive attention, ſince I found myſelf ſo powerfully recommended by it to kindneſs and eſteem.

The deſire of adviſing has a very extenſive prevalence; and ſince advice cannot be given but to thoſe that will hear it, a patient liſtener is neceſſary to the accommodation of all thoſe who deſire to be confirmed in the opinion of their own wiſdom: a patient liſtener,

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however, is not always to be had; the preſent age, whatever age is preſent, is ſo vitiated and diſordered that young people are readier to talk than to attend, and good counſel is only thrown away upon thoſe who are full of their own perfections.

I was, therefore, in this ſcarcity of good ſenſe, a general favourite; and ſeldom ſaw a day in which ſome ſober matron did not invite me to her houſe, or take me out in her chariot, for the ſake of inſtructing me how to keep my character in this cenſorious age, how to conduct myſelf in the time of courtſhip, how to ſtipulate for a ſettlement, how to manage a huſband of every character, regulate my family, and educate my children.

We are all naturally credulous in our own favour. Having been ſo often careſſed and applauded for my docility, I was willing to believe myſelf really enlightened by inſtruction, and completely qualified for the taſk of life. I did not doubt but I was entering the world with a mind furniſhed againſt all exigencies, with expedients to extricate myſelf from every difficulty, and ſagacity to provide againſt every danger; I was, therefore, in haſte to give ſome ſpecimen of my prudence, and to ſhow that this liberality of inſtruction had not been idly laviſhed upon a mind incapable of improvement.

My purpoſe, for why ſhould I deny it? was like that of other women, to obtain a huſband of rank and fortune ſuperior to my own; and in this I had the concurrence of all thoſe that had aſſumed the province of directing me. That the woman was undone who married below herſelf, was univerſally agreed: and though ſome

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ſome ventured to aſſert, that the richer man ought invariably to be preferred, and that money was a ſufficient compenſation for a defective anceſtry; yet the majority declared warmly for a gentleman, and were of opinion that upſtarts ſhould not be encouraged.

With regard to other qualifications I had an irreconcileable variety of inſtructions. I was ſometimes told, that deformity was no defect in a man; and that he who was not encouraged to intrigue by an opinion of his perſon, was more likely to value the tenderneſs of his wife: but a grave widow directed me to chooſe a man who might imagine himſelf agreeable to me, for that the deformed were always inſupportably vigilant, and apt to ſink into ſullenneſs, or burſt into rage, if they found their wife's eye wandering for a moment to a good face or a handſome ſhape.

They were, however, all unanimous in warning me, with repeated cautions, againſt all thoughts of union with a wit, as a being with whom no happineſs could poſſibly be enjoyed: men of every other kind I was taught to govern, but a wit was an animal for whom no arts of taming had been yet diſcovered: the woman whom he could once get within his power, was conſidered as loſt to all hope of dominion or of quiet; for he would detect artifice and defeat allurement; and if once he diſcovered any failure of conduct, would believe his own eyes, in defiance of tears, careſſes, and proteſtations.

In purſuance of theſe ſage principles, I proceeded to form my ſchemes; and while I was yet in the firſt bloom of youth, was taken out at an aſſembly by Mr. *Friſk*. I am afraid my cheeks glowed, and my eyes

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ſparkled; for I obſerved the looks of all my ſuperintendants fixed anxiouſly upon me; and I was next day cautioned againſt him from all hands, as a man of the moſt dangerous and formidable kind, who had writ verſes to one lady, and then forſaken her only becauſe ſhe could not read them, and had lampooned another for no other fault than defaming his ſiſter.

Having been hitherto accuſtomed to obey, I ventured to diſmiſs Mr. *Friſk*, who happily did not think me worth the labour of a lampoon. I was then addreſſed by Mr. *Sturdy*, and congratulated by all my friends on the manors of which I was ſhortly to be lady: but *Sturdy*'s converſation was ſo groſs, that after the third viſit I could endure him no longer; and incurred, by diſmiſſing him, the cenſure of all my friends, who declared that my nicety was greater than my prudence, and that they feared it would be my fate at laſt to be wretched with a wit.

By a wit, however, I was never afterwards attacked, but lovers of every other claſs, or pretended lovers, I have often had; and, notwithſtanding the advice conſtantly given me, to have no regard in my choice to my own inclinations, I could not forbear to diſcard ſome for vice, and ſome for rudeneſs. I was once loudly cenſured for refuſing an old gentleman who offered an enormous jointure, and died of the phthiſic a year after; and was ſo baited with inceſſant importunities, that I ſhould have given my hand to *Drone* the ſtock-jobber, had not the reduction of intereſt made him afraid of the expenſes of matrimony.

Some, indeed, I was permitted to encourage; but miſcarried of the main end, by treating them according

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ing to the rules of art which had been prescribed me. *Altilis*, an old maid, infused into me so much haughtiness and reserve, that some of my lovers withdrew themselves from my frown, and returned no more; others were driven away, by the demands of settlement which the widow *Trapland* directed me to make; and I have learned, by many experiments, that to ask advice is to lose opportunity.

I am, Sir,

Your humble Servant,

PERDITA.

NUMB. 81. TUESDAY, *August* 14, 1753.

Nil desperandum. HOR.

Avaunt despair.

I HAVE sometimes heard it disputed in conversation, whether it be more laudable or desirable, that a man should think too highly or too meanly of himself: it is on all hands agreed to be best, that he should think rightly: but since a fallible being will always make some deviations from exact rectitude, it is not wholly useless to inquire towards which side it is safer to decline.

The prejudices of mankind seem to favour him who errs by underrating his own powers: he is considered as a modest and harmless member of society, not likely to break the peace by competition, to endeavour after such splendour of reputation as may dim the lustre of

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others, or to interrupt any in the enjoyment of themſelves; he is no man's rival, and, therefore, may be every man's friend.

The opinion which a man entertains of himſelf ought to be diſtinguiſhed, in order to an accurate diſcuſſion of this queſtion, as it relates to perſons or to things. To think highly of ourſelves in compariſon with others, to aſſume by our own authority that precedence which none is willing to grant, muſt be always invidious and offenſive; but to rate our powers high in proportion to things, and imagine ourſelves equal to great undertakings, while we leave others in poſſeſſion of the ſame abilities, cannot with equal juſtice provoke cenſure.

It muſt be confeſſed, that ſelf-love may diſpoſe us to decide too haſtily in our own favour: but who is hurt by the miſtake? If we are incited by this vain opinion to attempt more than we can perform, ours is the labour, and ours is the diſgrace.

But he that dares to think well of himſelf, will not always prove to be miſtaken; and the good effects of his confidence will then appear in great attempts and great performances: if he ſhould not fully complete his deſign, he will at leaſt advance it ſo far as to leave an eaſier taſk for him that ſucceeds him; and even though he ſhould wholly fail, he will fail with honour.

But from the oppoſite error, from torpid deſpondency can come no advantage; it is the froſt of the ſoul, which binds up all its powers, and congeals life in perpetual ſterility. He that has no hopes of ſucceſs, will make no attempts; and where nothing is attempted, nothing can be done.

Every man, ſhould, therefore, endeavour to maintain

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tain in himſelf a favourable opinion of the powers of the human mind; which are perhaps, in every man, greater than they appear, and might, by diligent cultivation, be exalted to a degree beyond what their poſſeſſor preſumes to believe. There is ſcarce any man but has found himſelf able, at the inſtigation of neceſſity, to do what in a ſtate of leiſure and deliberation he would have concluded impoſſible; and ſome of our ſpecies have ſignalized themſelves by ſuch achievements, as prove that there are few things above human hope.

It has been the policy of all nations to preſerve, by ſome publick monuments, the memory of thoſe who have ſerved their country by great exploits: there is the ſame reaſon for continuing or reviving the names of thoſe, whoſe extenſive abilities have dignified humanity. An honeſt emulation may be alike excited; and the philoſopher's curioſity may be inflamed by a catalogue of the works of *Boyle* or *Bacon*, as *Themiſtocles* was kept awake by the trophies of *Miltiades*.

Among the favourites of nature that have from time to time appeared in the world, enriched with various endowments and contrarieties of excellence, none ſeems to have been more exalted above the common rate of humanity, than the man known about two centuries ago by the appellation of the Admirable *Crichton*; of whoſe hiſtory, whatever we may ſuppreſs as ſurpaſſing credibility, yet we ſhall, upon inconteſtible authority, relate enough to rank him among prodigies.

'Virtue,' ſays *Virgil*, 'is better accepted when it comes in a pleaſing form:' the perſon of *Crichton* was eminently beautiful; but his beauty was conſiſtent with ſuch

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ſuch activity and ſtrength, that in fencing he would ſpring at one bound the length of twenty feet upon his antagoniſt; and he uſed the ſword in either hand with ſuch force and dexterity, that ſcarce any one had courage to engage him.

Having ſtudied at *St. Andrew*'s in *Scotland*, he went to *Paris* in his twenty-firſt year, and affixed on the gate of the college of *Navarre* a kind of challenge to the learned of that univerſity to diſpute with him on a certain day; offering to his opponents, whoever they ſhould be, the choice of ten languages, and of all the faculties and ſciences. On the day appointed three thouſand auditors aſſembled, when four doctors of the church and fifty maſters appeared againſt him; and one of his antagoniſts confeſſes, that the doctors were defeated; that he gave proofs of knowledge above the reach of man; and that a hundred years paſſed without food or ſleep, would not be ſufficient for the attainment of his learning. After a diſputation of nine hours he was preſented by the preſident and profeſſors with a diamond and a purſe of gold, and diſmiſſed with repeated acclamations.

From *Paris* he went away to *Rome*, where he made the ſame challenge, and had in the preſence of the *Pope* and cardinals the ſame ſucceſs. Afterwards he contracted at *Venice* an acquaintance with *Aldus Manutius*, by whom he was introduced to the learned of that city: then viſited *Padua*, where he engaged in another publick diſputation, beginning his performance with an extemporal poem in praiſe of the city and the aſſembly then preſent, and concluding with an oration equally unpremeditated in commendation of ignorance.

He

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He afterwards publiſhed another challenge, in which he declared himſelf ready to detect the errors of *Ariſtotle* and all his commentators, either in the common forms of logick, or in any which his antagoniſts ſhould propoſe of a hundred different kinds of verſe.

Theſe acquiſitions of learning, however ſtupendous, were not gained at the expenſe of any pleaſure which youth generally indulges, or by the omiſſion of any accompliſhment in which it becomes a gentleman to excel: he practiſed in great perfection the arts of drawing and painting, he was an eminent performer in both vocal and inſtrumental muſick, he danced with uncommon gracefulneſs, and on the day after his diſputation at *Paris* exhibited his ſkill in horſemanſhip before the court of *France*, where at a publick match of tilting, he bore away the ring upon his lance fifteen times together.

He excelled likewiſe in domeſtick games of leſs dignity and reputation; and in the interval between his challenge and diſputation at *Paris*, he ſpent ſo much of his time at cards, dice, and tennis, that a lampoon was fixed upon the gate of the *Sorbonne*, directing thoſe that would ſee this monſter of erudition, to look for him at the tavern.

So extenſive was his acquaintance with life and manners, that in an *Italian* comedy compoſed by himſelf, and exhibited before the court of *Mantua*, he is ſaid to have perſonated fifteen different characters; in all which he might ſucceed without great difficulty, ſince he had ſuch power of retention, that once hearing an oration of an hour, he would repeat it exactly, and in the recital

follow

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follow the ſpeaker through all his variety of tone and geſticulation.

Nor was his ſkill in arms leſs than in learning, or his courage inferior to his ſkill: there was a prize-fighter at *Mantua*, who travelling about the world, according to the barbarous cuſtom of that age, as a general challenger, had defeated the moſt celebrated maſters in many parts of Europe; and in *Mantua*, where he then reſided, had killed three that appeared againſt him. The duke repented that he had granted him his protection; when *Crichton* looking on his ſanguinary ſucceſs with indignation, offered to ſtake fifteen hundred piſtoles, and mount the ſtage againſt him. The duke, with ſome reluctance, conſented, and on the day fixed the combatants appeared: their weapon ſeems to have been ſingle rapier, which was then newly introduced in *Italy*. The prize-fighter advanced with great violence and fierceneſs, and *Crichton* contented himſelf calmly to ward his paſſes, and ſuffered him to exhauſt his vigour by his own fury. *Crichton* then became the aſſailant; and preſſed upon him with ſuch force and agility, that he thruſt him thrice through the body, and ſaw him expire; he then divided the prize he had won among the widows whoſe huſbands had been killed.

The death of this wonderful man I ſhould be willing to conceal, did I not know that every reader will inquire curiouſly after that fatal hour, which is common to all human beings, however diſtinguiſhed from each other by nature or by fortune.

The duke of *Mantua* having received ſo many proofs of

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of his various merit, made him tutor to his ſon *Vicentio di Gonzaga*, a prince of looſe manners and turbulent diſpoſition. On this occaſion it was, that he compoſed the comedy in which he exhibited ſo many different characters with exact propriety. But his honour was of ſhort continuance; for as he was one night in the time of Carnival rambling about the ſtreets, with his guitar in his hand, he was attacked by ſix men maſked. Neither his courage nor ſkill in this exigence deſerted him; he oppoſed them with ſuch activity and ſpirit, that he ſoon diſperſed them, and diſarmed their leader, who throwing off his maſk, diſcovered himſelf to be the prince his pupil. *Crichton* falling on his knees, took his own ſword by the point, and preſented it to the prince; who immediately ſeized it, and inſtigated, as ſome ſay, by jealouſy, according to others, only by drunken fury and brutal reſentment, thruſt him through the heart.

Thus was the admirable *Crichton* brought into that ſtate, in which he could excel the meaneſt of mankind only by a few empty honours paid to his memory: the court of *Mantua* teſtified their eſteem by a publick mourning, the contemporary wits were profuſe of their encomiums, and the palaces of *Italy* were adorned with pictures, repreſenting him on horſeback with a lance in one hand and a book in the other.

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NUMB. 84. SATURDAY, *August* 25, 1753.

——— *Tolle periculum,*
Jam vaga prœsiliet frœnis natura remotis. HOR.

But take the danger and the shame away,
And vagrant nature bounds upon her prey. FRANCIS

To the ADVENTURER.

SIR,

IT has been observed, I think, by Sir *William Temple*, and after him by almost every other writer, that *England* affords a greater variety of characters than the rest of the world. This is ascribed to the liberty prevailing amongst us, which gives every man the privilege of being wise or foolish his own way, and preserves him from the necessity of hypocrisy or the servility of imitation.

That the position itself is true, I am not completely satisfied. To be nearly acquainted with the people of different countries can happen to very few; and in life, as in every thing else beheld at a distance, there appears an even uniformity: the petty discriminations which diversify the natural character, are not discoverable but by a close inspection; we, therefore, find them most at home, because there we have most opportunities of remarking them. Much less am I convinced, that this peculiar diversification, if it be real, is the consequence

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conſequence of peculiar liberty; for where is the government to be found that ſuperintends individuals with ſo much vigilance, as not to leave their private conduct without reſtraint? Can it enter into a reaſonable mind to imagine, that men of every other nation are not equally maſters of their own time or houſes with ourſelves, and equally at liberty to be parſimonious or profuſe, frolick or ſullen, abſtinent or luxurious? Liberty is certainly neceſſary to the full play of predominant humours; but ſuch liberty is to be found alike under the government of the many or the few, in monarchies or in commonwealths.

How readily the predominant paſſion ſnatches an interval of liberty, and how faſt it expands itſelf when the weight of reſtraint is taken away, I had lately an opportunity to diſcover, as I took a journey into the country in a ſtage coach; which, as every journey is a kind of adventure, may be very properly related to you, though I can diſplay no ſuch extraordinary aſſembly as *Cervantes* has collected at *Don Quixote*'s inn.

In a ſtage coach the paſſengers are for the moſt part wholly unknown to one another, and without expectation of ever meeting again when their journey is at an end; one ſhould therefore imagine, that it was of little importance to any of them, what conjectures the reſt ſhould form concerning him. Yet ſo it is, that as all think themſelves ſecure from detection, all aſſume that character of which they are moſt deſirous, and on no occaſion is the general ambition of ſuperiority more apparently indulged.

On the day of our departure, in the twilight of the morning, I aſcended the vehicle with three men and two

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two women, my fellow travellers. It was eaſy to obſerve the affected elevation of mien with which every one entered, and the ſupercilious civility with which they paid their compliments to each other. When the firſt ceremony was diſpatched, we ſat ſilent for a long time, all employed in collecting importance into our faces, and endeavouring to ſtrike reverence and ſubmiſſion into our companions.

It is always obſervable that ſilence propagates itſelf, and that the longer talk has been ſuſpended, the more difficult it is to find any thing to ſay. We began now to wiſh for converſation; but no one ſeemed inclined to deſcend from his dignity, or firſt propoſe a topick of diſcourſe. At laſt a corpulent gentleman, who had equipped himſelf for this expedition, with a ſcarlet ſurtout and a large hat with a broad lace, drew out his watch, looked on it in ſilence, and then held it dangling at his finger. This was, I ſuppoſe, underſtood by all the company as an invitation to aſk the time of the day, but nobody appeared to heed his overture: and his deſire to be talking ſo far overcame his reſentment, that he let us know of his own accord that it was paſt five, and that in two hours we ſhould be at breakfaſt.

His condeſcenſion was thrown away; we continued all obdurate; the ladies held up their heads; I amuſed myſelf with watching their behaviour; and of the other two, one ſeemed to employ himſelf in counting the trees as we drove by them, the other drew his hat over his eyes and counterfeited a ſlumber. The man of benevolence, to ſhow that he was not depreſſed by our neglect, hummed a tune and beat time upon his ſnuff box.

Thus

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Thus univerſally diſpleaſed with one another, and not much delighted with ourſelves, we came at laſt to the little inn appointed for our repaſt; and all began at once to recompenſe themſelves for the conſtraint of ſilence, by innumerable queſtions and orders to the people that attended us. At laſt, what every one had called for was got, or declared impoſſible to be got at that time, and we were perſuaded to ſit round the ſame table; when the gentleman in the red ſurtout looked again upon his watch, told us that we had half an hour to ſpare, but he was ſorry to ſee ſo little merriment among us; that all fellow travellers were for the time upon the level, and that it was always his way to make himſelf one of the company. "I remember," ſays he, "it was on juſt ſuch a morning as this, that I and "my Lord *Mumble* and the Duke of *Tenterden* were "out upon a ramble: we called at a little houſe as it "might be this; and my landlady, I warrant you, not "ſuſpecting to whom ſhe was talking, was ſo jocular "and facetious, and made ſo many merry anſwers to "our queſtions, that we were all ready to burſt with "laughter. At laſt the good woman happening to "overhear me whiſper the duke and call him by his "title, was ſo ſurpriſed and confounded, that we could "ſcarcely get a word from her; and the duke never "met me from that day to this, but he talks of the "little houſe, and quarrels with me for terrifying the "landlady."

He had ſcarcely time to congratulate himſelf on the veneration which this narrative muſt have procured him from the company, when one of the ladies having reached out for a plate on a diſtant part of the table,

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began to remark, "the inconveniencies of travelling, "and the difficulty which they who never ſat at home "without a great number of attendants, found in per- "forming for themſelves ſuch offices as the road re- "quired; but that people of quality often travelled in "diſguiſe, and might be generally known from the "vulgar by their condeſcenſion to poor innkeepers, and "the allowance which they made for any defect in "their entertainment; that for her part, while people "were civil and meant well, it was never her cuſtom "to find fault, for one was not to expect upon a "journey all that one enjoyed at one's own houſe."

A general emulation ſeemed now to be excited. One of the men, who had hitherto ſaid nothing, called for the laſt newspaper; and having peruſed it a while with deep penſiveneſs, "It is impoſſible," ſays he, "for any man to gueſs how to act with regard to the "ſtocks; laſt week it was the general opinion that they "would fall; and I ſold out twenty thouſand pounds "in order to a purchaſe: they have now riſen unex- "pectedly; and I make no doubt but at my return to "*London* I ſhall riſk thirty thouſand pounds among "them again."

A young man, who had hitherto diſtinguiſhed himſelf only by the vivacity of his looks, and a frequent diverſion of his eyes from one object to another, upon this cloſed his ſnuff-box, and told us that "he had a "hundred times talked with the chancellor and the "judges on the ſubject of the ſtocks; that for his part "he did not pretend to be well acquainted with the "principles on which they were eſtabliſhed, but had "always heard them reckoned pernicious to trade, un-

"certain

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" certain in their produce, and unſolid in their foun-
" dation; and that he had been adviſed by three judges,
" his moſt intimate friends, never to venture his money
" in the funds, but to put it out upon land ſecurity,
" till he could light upon an eſtate in his own country."

It might be expected, that upon theſe glimpſes of latent dignity, we ſhould all have began to look round us with veneration; and have behaved like the princes of romance, when the enchantment that diſguiſes them is diſſolved, and they diſcover the dignity of each other: yet it happened, that none of theſe hints made much impreſſion on the company; every one was apparently ſuſpected of endeavouring to impoſe falſe appearances upon the reſt; all continued their haughtineſs in hopes to enforce their claims; and all grew every hour more ſullen, becauſe they found their repreſentations of themſelves without effect.

Thus we travelled on four days with malevolence perpetually increaſing, and without any endeavour but to outvie each other in ſupercilioufneſs and neglect; and when any two of us could ſeparate ourſelves for a moment, we vented our indignation at the ſaucineſs of the reſt.

At length the journey was at an end; and time and chance, that ſtrip off all diſguiſes, have diſcovered that the intimate of lords and dukes is a nobleman's butler, who has furniſhed a ſhop with the money he has ſaved; the man who deals ſo largely in the funds, is a clerk of a broker in *'Change-alley*; the lady who ſo carefully concealed her quality, keeps a cook-ſhop behind the *Exchange*; and the young man, who is ſo happy in the friendſhip of the judges, engroſſes and tranſcribes for

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bread in a garret of the *Temple.* Of one of the women only I could make no diſadvantageous detection, becauſe ſhe had aſſumed no character, but accommodated herſelf to the ſcene before her, without any ſtruggle for diſtinction or ſuperiority.

I could not forbear to reflect on the folly of practiſing a fraud, which, as the event ſhowed, had been already practiſed too often to ſucceed, and by the ſucceſs of which no advantage could have been obtained; of aſſuming a character, which was to end with the day; and of claiming upon falſe pretences honours which muſt periſh with the breath that paid them.

But, Mr. *Adventurer*, let not thoſe who laugh at me and my companions, think this folly confined to a ſtage coach. Every man in the journey of life takes the ſame advantage of the ignorance of his fellow travellers, diſguiſes himſelf in counterfeited merit, and hears thoſe praiſes with complacency which his conſcience reproaches him for accepting. Every man deceives himſelf, while he thinks he is deceiving others; and forgets that the time is at hand when every illuſion ſhall ceaſe, when fictitious excellence ſhall be torn away, and *all* muſt be ſhown to *all* in their real eſtate.

I am, SIR,

Your humble ſervant,

VIATOR.

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NUMB. 85. TUESDAY, *Auguſt* 28, 1753.

Qui cupit optatam curſu contingere metam,
Multa tulit fecitque puer. HOR.

The youth, who hopes th' Olympick prize to gain,
All arts muſt try, and every toil ſuſtain. FRANCIS.

IT is obſerved by *Bacon*, that "reading makes a full "man, converſation a ready man, and writing an "exact man."

As *Bacon* attained to degrees of knowledge ſcarcely ever reached by any other man, the directions which he gives for ſtudy have certainly a juſt claim to our regard; for who can teach an art with ſo great authority, as he that has practiſed it with undiſputed ſucceſs?

Under the protection of ſo great a name, I ſhall, therefore, venture to inculcate to my ingenious contemporaries, the neceſſity of reading, the fitneſs of conſulting other underſtandings than their own, and of conſidering the ſentiments and opinions of thoſe who, however neglected in the preſent age, had in their own times, and many of them a long time afterwards, ſuch reputation for knowledge and acuteneſs as will ſcarcely ever be attained by thoſe that deſpiſe them.

An opinion has of late been, I know not how, propagated among us, that libraries are filled only with uſeleſs lumber; that men of parts ſtand in need of no

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assistance; and that to spend life in poring upon books, is only to imbibe prejudices, to obstruct and embarrass the powers of nature, to cultivate memory at the expense of judgment, and to bury reason under a chaos of indigested learning.

Such is the talk of many who think themselves wise, and of some who are thought wise by others; of whom part probably believe their own tenets, and part may be justly suspected of endeavouring to shelter their ignorance in multitudes, and of wishing to destroy that reputation which they have no hopes to share. It will, I believe, be found invariably true, that learning was never decried by any learned man; and what credit can be given to those, who venture to condemn that which they do not know?

If reason has the power ascribed to it by its advocates, if so much is to be discovered by attention and meditation, it is hard to believe, that so many millions, equally participating of the bounties of nature with ourselves, have been for ages upon ages meditating in vain: if the wits of the present time expect the regard of posterity, which will then inherit the reason which is now thought superior to instruction, surely they may allow themselves to be instructed by the reason of former generations. When, therefore, an author declares, that he has been able to learn nothing from the writings of his predecessors, and such a declaration has been lately made, nothing but a degree of arrogance unpardonable in the greatest human understanding, can hinder him from perceiving that he is raising prejudices against his own performance; for with what hopes of success can he attempt that in which greater

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abilities have hitherto miſcarried? or with what peculiar force does he ſuppoſe himſelf invigorated, that difficulties hitherto invincible ſhould give way before him.

Of thoſe whom Providence has qualified to make any additions to human knowledge, the number is extremely ſmall; and what can be added by each ſingle mind, even of this ſuperior claſs, is very little: the greateſt part of mankind muſt owe all their knowledge, and all muſt owe far the larger part of it, to the information of others. To underſtand the works of celebrated authors, to comprehend their ſyſtems, and retain their reaſonings, is a taſk more than equal to common intellects; and he is by no means to be accounted uſeleſs or idle, who has ſtored his mind with acquired knowledge, and can detail it occaſionally to others who have leſs leiſure or weaker abilities.

Perſius has juſtly obſerved, that knowledge is nothing to him who is not known by others to poſſeſs it: to the ſcholar himſelf it is nothing with reſpect either to honour or advantage, for the world cannot reward thoſe qualities which are concealed from it; with reſpect to others it is nothing, becauſe it affords no help to ignorance or error.

It is with juſtice, therefore, that in an accompliſhed character, *Horace* unites juſt ſentiments with the power of expreſſing them; and he that has once accumulated learning, is next to conſider, how he ſhall moſt widely diffuſe and moſt agreeably impart it.

A ready man is made by converſation. He that buries himſelf among his manuſcripts "beſprent," as *Pope* expreſſes it, "with learned duſt," and wears out

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his days and nights in perpetual reſearch and ſolitary meditation, is too apt to loſe in his elocution what he adds to his wiſdom; and when he comes into the world, to appear overloaded with his own notions, like a man armed with weapons which he cannot wield. He has no facility of inculcating his ſpeculations, of adapting himſelf to the various degrees of intellect which the accidents of converſation will preſent; but will talk to moſt unintelligibly, and to all unpleaſantly.

I was once preſent at the lectures of a profound philoſopher, a man really ſkilled in the ſcience which he profeſſed, who having occaſion to explain the terms *opacum* and *pellucidum*, told us, after ſome heſitation, that *opacum* was, as one might ſay, *opake*, and that *pellucidum* ſignified *pellucid*. Such was the dexterity with which this learned reader facilitated to his auditors the intricacies of ſcience; and ſo true is it, that a man may know what he cannot teach.

Boerhaave complains, that the writers who have treated of chymiſtry before him, are uſeleſs to the greater part of ſtudents, becauſe they preſuppoſe their readers to have ſuch degrees of ſkill as are not often to be found. Into the ſame error are all men apt to fall, who have familiarized any ſubject to themſelves in ſolitude: they diſcourſe, as if they thought every other man had been employed in the ſame inquiries; and expect that ſhort hints and obſcure alluſions will produce in others the ſame train of ideas which they excite in themſelves.

Nor is this the only inconvenience which the man of ſtudy ſuffers from a recluſe life. When he meets with

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with an opinion that pleaſes him, he catches it up with eagerneſs; looks only after ſuch arguments as tend to his confirmation; or ſpares himſelf the trouble of diſcuſſion, and adopts it with very little proof; indulges it long without ſuſpicion, and in time unites it to the general body of his knowledge, and treaſures it up among inconteſtible truths: but when he comes into the world among men who, arguing upon diſſimilar principles, have been led to different concluſions, and being placed in various ſituations, view the ſame object on many ſides; he finds his darling poſition attacked, and himſelf in no condition to defend it: having thought always in one train, he is in the ſtate of a man who having fenced always with the ſame maſter, is perplexed and amazed by a new poſture of his antagoniſt; he is entangled in unexpected difficulties, he is haraſſed by ſudden objections, he is unprovided with ſolutions or replies; his ſurpriſe impedes his natural powers of reaſoning, his thoughts are ſcattered and confounded, and he gratifies the pride of airy petulance with an eaſy victory.

It is difficult to imagine, with what obſtinacy truths which one mind perceives almoſt by intuition, will be rejected by another; and how many artifices muſt be practiſed, to procure admiſſion for the moſt evident propoſitions into underſtandings frighted by their novelty, or hardened againſt them by accidental prejudice; it can ſcarcely be conceived, how frequently, in theſe extemporaneous controverſies, the dull will be ſubtle, and the acute abſurd; how often ſtupidity will elude the force of argument, by involving itſelf in its own gloom; and miſtaken ingenuity will weave artful fallacies,

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lacies, which reaſon can ſcarcely find means to diſentangle.

In theſe encounters the learning of the recluſe uſually fails him: nothing but long habit and frequent experiments can confer the power of changing a poſition into various forms, preſenting it in different points of view, connecting it with known and granted truths, fortifying it with intelligible arguments, and illuſtrating it by apt ſimilitudes; and he, therefore, that has collected his knowledge in ſolitude, muſt learn its application by mixing with mankind.

But while the various opportunities of converſation invite us to try every mode of argument, and every art of recommending our ſentiments, we are frequently betrayed to the uſe of ſuch as are not in themſelves ſtrictly defenſible: a man heated in talk, and eager of victory, takes advantage of the miſtakes or ignorance of his adverſary, lays hold of conceſſions to which he knows he has no right, and urges proofs likely to prevail in his opponent, though he knows himſelf that they have no force: thus the ſeverity of reaſon is relaxed, many topicks are accumulated, but without juſt arrangement or diſtinction; we learn to ſatisfy ourſelves with ſuch ratiocination as ſilences others; and ſeldom recal to a cloſe examination, that diſcourſe which has gratified our vanity with victory and applauſe.

Some caution, therefore, muſt be uſed leſt copiouſneſs and facility be made leſs valuable by inaccuracy and confuſion. To fix the thoughts by writing, and ſubject them to frequent examinations and reviews, is the beſt method of enabling the mind to detect its own ſophiſms, and keep it on guard againſt the fallacies which

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which it practiſes on others: in converſation we naturally diffuſe our thoughts, and in writing we contract them; method is the excellence of writing, and unconſtraint the grace of converſation.

To read, write, and converſe in due proportions, is therefore, the buſineſs of a man of letters. For all theſe there is not often equal opportunity; excellence, therefore, is not often attainable; and moſt men fail in one or other of the ends propoſed, and are full without readineſs, or ready without exactneſs. Some deficiency muſt be forgiven all, becauſe all are men; and more muſt be allowed to paſs uncenſured in the greater part of the world, becauſe none can confer upon himſelf abilities, and few have the choice of ſituations proper for the improvement of thoſe which nature has beſtowed: it is however, reaſonable, to have *perfection* in our eye; that we may always advance towards it, though we know it never can be reached.

NUMB. 92. SATURDAY, *September* 22, 1753.

Cum tabulis animum cenſoris ſumet honeſti. HOR.

Bold be the critick, zealous to his truſt,
Like the firm judge inexorably juſt.

To the ADVENTURER.

SIR,

IN the papers of criticiſm which you have given to the publick, I have remarked a ſpirit of candour and love

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love of truth, equally remote from bigotry and captiouſneſs; a juſt diſtribution of praiſe amongſt the ancients and the moderns; a ſober deference to reputation long eſtabliſhed, without a blind adoration of antiquity; and a willingneſs to favour later performances, without a light or puerile fondneſs for novelty.

I ſhall, therefore, venture to lay before you, ſuch obſervations as have riſen to my mind in the conſideration of *Virgil*'s paſtorals, without any inquiry how far my ſentiments deviate from eſtabliſhed rules or common opinions.

If we ſurvey the ten paſtorals in a general view, it will be found that *Virgil* can derive from them very little claim to the praiſe of an inventor. To ſearch into the antiquity of this kind of poetry, is not my preſent purpoſe; that it has long ſubſiſted in the eaſt, the *Sacred Writings* ſufficiently inform us; and we may conjecture, with great probability, that it was ſometimes the devotion, and ſometimes the entertainment of the firſt generations of mankind. *Theocritus* united elegance with ſimplicity; and taught his ſhepherds to ſing with ſo much eaſe and harmony, that his countrymen deſpairing to excel, forbore to imitate him; and the *Greeks*, however vain or ambitious, left him in quiet poſſeſſion of the garlands which the wood nymphs had beſtowed upon him.

Virgil, however, taking advantage of another language ventured to copy or to rival the *Sicilian bard*: he has written with greater ſplendour of diction, and elevation of ſentiment: but as the magnificence of his performances was more, the ſimplicity was leſs; and, perhaps, where he excels *Theocritus*, he ſometimes obtains

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tains his ſuperiority by deviating from the paſtoral character, and performing what *Theocritus* never attempted.

Yet, though I would willingly pay to *Theocritus* the honour which is always due to an original author, I am far from intending to depreciate *Virgil*; of whom *Horace* juſtly declares, that the rural muſes have appropriated to him their elegance and ſweetneſs, and who, as he copied *Theocritus* in his deſign, has reſembled him likewiſe in his ſucceſs; for, if we except *Calphurnius*, an obſcure author of the lower ages, I know not that a ſingle paſtoral was written after him by any poet, till the revival of literature.

But though his general merit has been univerſally acknowledged, I am far from thinking all the productions of his rural *Thalia* equally excellent: there is, indeed, in all his paſtorals a ſtrain of verſification which it is vain to ſeek in any other poet; but if we except the firſt and the tenth, they ſeem liable either wholly or in part to conſiderable objections.

The ſecond, though we ſhould forget the great charge againſt it, which I am afraid can never be refuted, might, I think, have periſhed, without any diminution of the praiſe of its author; for I know not that it contains one affecting ſentiment or pleaſing deſcription, or one paſſage that ſtrikes the imagination or awakens the paſſions.

The third contains a conteſt between two ſhepherds, begun with a quarrel of which ſome particulars might well be ſpared, carried on with ſprightlineſs and elegance, and terminated at laſt in a reconciliation: but, ſurely, whether the invectives with which they attack each

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each other be true or falſe, they are too much degraded from the dignity of paſtoral innocence; and inſtead of rejoicing that they are both victorious, I ſhould not have grieved could they have been both defeated.

The poem to *Pollio* is, indeed, of another kind: it is filled with images at once ſplendid and pleaſing, and is elevated with grandeur of language worthy of the firſt of *Roman* poets; but I am not able to reconcile myſelf to the diſproportion, between the performance and the occaſion that produced it: that the golden age ſhould return becauſe *Pollio* had a ſon, appears ſo wild a fiction, that I am ready to ſuſpect the poet of having written, for ſome other purpoſe, what he took this opportunity of producing to the publick.

The fifth contains a celebration of *Daphnis*, which has ſtood to all ſucceeding ages as the model of paſtoral elegies. To deny praiſe to a performance which ſo many thouſands have laboured to imitate, would be to judge with too little deference for the opinion of mankind: yet whoever ſhall read it with impartiality, will find that moſt of the images are of the mythological kind, and therefore, eaſily invented; and that there are few ſentiments of rational praiſe or natural lamentation.

In the *Silenus* he again riſes to the dignity of philoſophick ſentiments, and heroick poetry. The addreſs to *Varus* is eminently beautiful: but ſince the compliment paid to *Gallus* fixes the tranſaction to his own time, the fiction of *Silenus* ſeems injudicious: nor has any ſufficient reaſon yet been found, to juſtify his choice of thoſe fables that make the ſubject of the ſong.

The ſeventh exhibits another conteſt of the tuneful ſhepherds:

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ſhepherds: and, ſurely, it is not without ſome reproach to his inventive power, that of ten paſtorals *Virgil* has written two upon the ſame plan. One of the ſhepherds now gains an acknowledged victory, but without any apparent ſuperiority, and the reader, when he ſees the prize adjudged, is not able to diſcover how it was deſerved.

Of the eighth paſtoral, ſo little is properly the work of *Virgil*, that he has no claim to other praiſe or blame than that of a tranſlator.

Of the ninth, it is ſcarce poſſible to diſcover the deſign or tendency; it is ſaid, I know not upon what authority, to have been compoſed from fragments of other poems; and except a few lines in which the author touches upon his own misfortunes, there is nothing that ſeems appropriated to any time or place, or of which any other uſe can be diſcovered than to fill up the poem.

The firſt and the tenth paſtorals, whatever be determined of the reſt, are ſufficient to place their author above the reach of rivalry. The complaint of *Gallus* diſappointed in his love, is full of ſuch ſentiments as diſappointed love naturally produces; his wiſhes are wild, his reſentment is tender, and his purpoſes are inconſtant. In the genuine language of deſpair, he ſooths himſelf awhile with the pity that ſhall be paid him after his death.

——— *Tamen cantabitis, Arcades, inquit,*
Montibus hæc veſtris: ſoli cantare periti
Arcades. O mihi tum quam molliter oſſa quieſcant,
Veſtra meos olim ſi fiſtula dicat amores!

——— Yet

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——— Yet, O Arcadian ſwains,
Ye beſt artificers of ſoothing ſtrains!
Tune your ſoft reeds, and teach your rocks my woes,
So ſhall my ſhade in ſweeter reſt repoſe.
O that your birth and buſineſs had been mine;
To feed the flock, and prune the ſpreading vine!

WARTON.

Diſcontented with his preſent condition, and deſirous to be any thing but what he is, he wiſhes himſelf one of the ſhepherds. He then catches the idea of rural tranquillity; but ſoon diſcovers how much happier he ſhould be in theſe happy regions, with *Lycoris* at his ſide:

Hìc gelidi fontes, hìc mollia prata, Lycori:
Hic nemus; hic ipſo tecum conſumerer ævo.
Nunc inſanus amor duri me Martis in armis;
Tela inter media, atque adverſos detinet hoſtes.
Tu procul a patria (nec ſit mihi credere) tantum
Alpinas, ah dura, nives, & frigore Rheni
Me ſine ſola vides. Ah te ne frigora lædant!
Ah tibi ne teneras glacies ſecet aſpera plantas!

Here cooling fountains roll thro' flow'ry meads,
Here woods, Lycoris, lift their verdant heads;
Here could I wear my careleſs life away,
And in thy arms inſenſibly decay.
Inſtead of that, me frantick love detains
'Mid foes, and dreadful darts, and bloody plains:
While you—and can my ſoul the tale believe,
Far from your country, lonely wand'ring leave
Me, me your lover, barbarous fugitive!
Seek the rough Alps where ſnows eternal ſhine,
And joyleſs borders of the frozen Rhine.
Ah! may no cold e'er blaſt my deareſt maid,
Nor pointed ice thy tender feet invade! WARTON.

He

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He then turns his thoughts on every ſide, in queſt of ſomething that may ſolace or amuſe him: he propoſes happineſs to himſelf, firſt in one ſcene and then in another: and at laſt finds that nothing will ſatisfy:

Jam neque Hamadryades rurſum, nec carmina nobis
Ipſa placent: ipſæ rurſum concedite ſylvæ,
Non illum noſtri poſſunt mutare labores;
Nec ſi frigoribus mediis Hebrumque bibamus,
Scithoniaſque nives hyemis ſubeamus aquoſæ:
Nec ſi, cum moriens alta liber aret in ulmo,
Æthiopum verſemus oves ſub ſidere Cancri,
Omnia vincit amor; et nos cedamus amori.

But now again no more the woodland maids,
Nor paſtoral ſongs delight—Farewell, ye ſhades—
No toils of ours the cruel god can change,
Tho' loſt in frozen deſerts we ſhould range;
Tho' we ſhould drink where chilling Hebrus flows,
Endure bleak winter blaſts, and Thracian ſnows;
Or on hot India's plains our flocks ſhould feed,
Where the parch'd elm declines his ſickening head;
Beneath fierce-glowing Cancer's fiery beams,
Far from cool breezes and refreſhing ſtreams.
Love over all maintains reſiſtleſs ſway,
And let us love's all-conquering power obey.

WARTON.

But notwithſtanding the excellence of the tenth paſtoral, I cannot forbear to give the preference to the firſt, which is equally natural and more diverſified. The complaint of the ſhepherd, who ſaw his old companion at eaſe in the ſhade, while himſelf was driving his little flock he knew not whither, is ſuch as, with variation of circumſtances, miſery always utters at the ſight of proſperity:

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Nos patriæ fines, & dulcia linquimus arva;
Nos patriam fugimus: tu, Tityre, lentus in umbra.
Formoſam reſonare doces Amaryllida ſylvas.

We leave our country's bounds, our much lov'd plains;
We from our country fly, unhappy ſwains!
You, Tit'rus, in the groves at leiſure laid,
Teach Amaryllis' name to every ſhade. WARTON.

His account of the difficulties of his journey, gives a very tender image of paſtoral diſtreſs:

——— *En ipſe capellas*
Protenus æger ago: hanc etiam vix, Tityre, duco:
Hic inter denſas corylosa modo namque gemellos,
Spem gregis, ah! ſilice in nuda connixa reliquit.

And lo! ſad partner of the general care,
Weary and faint I drive my goats afar!
While ſcarcely this my leading hand ſuſtains,
Tir'd with the way, and recent from her pains;
For 'mid yon tangled hazels as we paſt,
On the bare flints her hapleſs twin ſhe caſt,
The hopes and promiſe of my ruin'd fold!
WARTON.

The deſcription of *Virgil*'s happineſs in his little farm, combines almoſt all the images of rural pleaſure; and he, therefore, that can read it with indifference, has no ſenſe of paſtoral poetry:

Fortunate ſenex, ergo tua rura manebunt,
Et tibi magna ſatis; quamvis lapis omnia nudus.
Limoſoque palus obducat paſcua junco,
Non inſueta gravis tentabunt pabula fœtas,
Nec mala vicini pecoris contagia lædent.
Fortunate ſenex, his inter flumina nota,
Et fontes ſacros, frigus captabis opacum.

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Hinc tibi, quæ ſemper vicino ab limite ſepes,
Hyblæis apibus florem depaſta ſalicti,
Sæpe levi ſomnum ſuadebit inire ſuſurro.
Hinc altâ ſub rupe canet frondator ad aurus;
Nec tamen interea raucæ tua cura, palumbes,
Nec gemere aëria ceſſabit turtur ab ulmo.

Happy old man! then ſtill thy farm's reſtor'd,
Enough for thee, ſhall bleſs thy frugal board.
What tho' rough ſtones the naked ſoil o'erſpread,
Or marſhy bulruſh rear its wat'ry head,
No foreign food they teeming ewes ſhall fear,
No touch contagious ſpread its influence here.
Happy old man! here 'mid th' accuſtom'd ſtreams
And ſacred ſprings, you'll ſhun the ſcorching beams;
While from yon willow-fence, thy picture's bound,
The bees that ſuck their flow'ry ſtores around,
Shall ſweetly mingle, with the whiſpering boughs,
Their lulling murmurs, and invite repoſe:
While from ſteep rocks the pruner's ſong is heard;
Nor the ſoft-cooing dove, thy fav'rite bird,
Mean while ſhall ceaſe to breathe her melting ſtrain,
Nor turtles from th' aërial elm to 'plain.

WARTON.

It may be obſerved, that theſe two poems were produced by events that really happened; and may, therefore, be of uſe to prove, that we can always feel more than we can imagine, and that the moſt artful fiction muſt give way to truth.

I am, SIR,

Your humble ſervant,

DUBIUS.

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NUMB. 95. TUESDAY, *October* 2, 1753.

—— *Dulcique animos novitate tenebo.* OVID.

And with ſweet novelty your ſoul detain.

IT is often charged upon writers, that with all their pretenſions to genius and diſcoveries, they do little more than copy one another; and that compoſitions obtruded upon the world with the pomp of novelty, contain only tedious repetitions of common ſentiments, or at beſt exhibit a tranſpoſition of known images, and give a new appearance to truth only by ſome ſlight difference of dreſs and decoration.

The allegation of reſemblance between authors, is indiſputably true; but the charge of plagiariſm, which is raiſed upon it, is not to be allowed with equal readineſs. A coincidence of ſentiment may eaſily happen without any communication, ſince there are many occaſions in which all reaſonable men will nearly think alike. Writers of all ages have had the ſame ſentiments, becauſe they have in all ages had the ſame objects of ſpeculation; the intereſts and paſſions, the virtues and vices of mankind, have been diverſified in different times, only by uneſſential and caſual varieties: and we muſt, therefore, expect in the works of all thoſe who attempt to deſcribe them, ſuch a likeneſs as we find in the pictures of the ſame perſon drawn in different periods of his life.

It

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It is neceſſary, therefore, that before an author be charged with plagiariſm, one of the moſt reproachful, though, perhaps, not the moſt atrocious of literary crimes, the ſubject on which he treats ſhould be carefully conſidered. We do not wonder, that hiſtorians, relating the ſame facts, agree in their narration; or that authors, delivering the elements of ſcience, advance the ſame theorems, and lay down the ſame definitions: yet it is not wholly without uſe to mankind, that books are multiplied, and that different authors lay out their labours on the ſame ſubject; for there will always be ſome reaſon why one ſhould on particular occaſions or to particular perſons, be preferable to another; ſome will be clear where others are obſcure, ſome will pleaſe by their ſtyle and others by their method, ſome by their embelliſhments and others by their ſimplicity, ſome by cloſeneſs and others by diffuſion.

The ſame indulgence is to be ſhown to the writers of morality: right and wrong are immutable; and thoſe, therefore, who teach us to diſtinguiſh them, if they all teach us right, muſt agree with one another. The relations of ſocial life, and the duties reſulting from them, muſt be the ſame at all times and in all nations: ſome petty differences may be, indeed, produced, by forms of government or arbitrary cuſtoms; but the general doctrine can receive no alteration.

Yet it is not be deſired, that morality ſhould be conſidered as interdicted to all future writers: men will always be tempted to deviate from their duty, and will, therefore, always want a monitor to recall them; and a new book often ſeizes the attention of the publick, without any other claim than that it is new. There is

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likewiſe in compoſition, as in other things, a perpetual viciſſitude of faſhion; and truth is recommended at one time to regard, by appearances which at another would expoſe it to neglect; the author, therefore, who has judgment to diſcern the taſte of his contemporaries, and ſkill to gratify it, will have always an opportunity to deſerve well of mankind, by conveying inſtruction to them in a grateful vehicle.

There are likewiſe many modes of compoſition, by which a moraliſt may deſerve the name of an original writer: he may familiariſe his ſyſtem by dialogues after the manner of the ancients, or ſubtilize it into a ſeries of ſyllogiſtic arguments; he may enforce his doctrine by ſerioufneſs and ſolemnity, or enliven it by ſprightlineſs and gayety; he may deliver his ſentiments in naked precepts, or illuſtrate them by hiſtorical examples; he may detain the ſtudious by the artful concatenation of a continued diſcourſe, or relieve the buſy by ſhort ſtrictures, and unconnected eſſays.

To excel in any of theſe forms of writing will require a particular cultivation of the genius; whoever can attain to excellence, will be certain to engage a ſet of readers, whom no other method would have equally allured; and he that communicates truth with ſucceſs, muſt be numbered among the firſt benefactors to mankind.

The ſame obſervation may be extended likewiſe to the paſſions: their influence is uniform, and their effects nearly the ſame in every human breaſt: a man loves and hates, deſires and avoids, exactly like his neighbour; reſentment and ambition, avarice and indolence, diſcover themſelves by the ſame ſymptoms in minds diſtant a thouſand years from one another.

Nothing,

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Nothing, therefore, can be more unjuſt, than to charge an author with plagiariſm, merely becauſe he aſſigns to every cauſe its natural effect; and makes his perſonages act, as others in like circumſtances have always done. There are conceptions in which all men will agree, though each derives them from his own obſervation: whoever has been in love, will repreſent a lover impatient of every idea that interrupts his meditations on his miſtreſs, retiring to ſhades and ſolitude, that he may muſe without diſturbance on his approaching happineſs, or aſſociating himſelf with ſome friend that flatters his paſſion, and talking away the hours of abſence upon his darling ſubject. Whoever has been ſo unhappy as to have felt the miſeries of long-continued hatred, will, without any aſſiſtance from ancient volumes, be able to relate how the paſſions are kept in perpetual agitation, by the recollection of injury and meditations of revenge; how the blood boils at the name of the enemy, and life is worn away in contrivances of miſchief.

Every other paſſion is alike ſimple and limited, if it be conſidered only with regard to the breaſt which it inhabits; the anatomy of the mind, as that of the body, muſt perpetually exhibit the ſame appearances; and though by the continued induſtry of ſucceſſive inquirers, new movements will be from time to time diſcovered, they can affect only the minuter parts, and are commonly of more curioſity than importance.

It will now be natural to inquire, by what arts are the writers of the preſent and future ages to attract the notice and favour of mankind. They are to obſerve

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the alterations which time is always making in the modes of life, that they may gratify every generation with a picture of themſelves. Thus love is uniform, but courtſhip is perpetually varying: the different arts of gallantry, which beauty has inſpired, would of themſelves be ſufficient to fill a volume; ſometimes balls and ſerenades, ſometimes tournaments and adventures, have been employed to melt the hearts of ladies, who in another century have been ſenſible of ſcarce any other merit than that of riches, and liſtened only to jointures and pin-money. Thus the ambitious man has at all times been eager of wealth and power; but theſe hopes have been gratified in ſome countries by ſupplicating the people, and in others by flattering the prince: honour in ſome ſtates has been only the reward of military achievements, in others it has been gained by noiſy turbulence and popular clamours. Avarice has worn a different form, as ſhe actuated the uſurer of *Rome*, and the ſtockjobber of *England*; and idleneſs itſelf, how little ſoever inclined to the trouble of invention, has been forced from time to time to change its amuſements, and contrive different methods of wearing out the day.

Here then is the fund, from which thoſe who ſtudy mankind may fill their compoſitions with an inexhauſtible variety of images and alluſions; and he muſt be confeſſed to look with little attention upon ſcenes thus perpetually changing, who cannot catch ſome of the figures before they are made vulgar by reiterated deſcriptions.

It has been diſcovered by Sir *Iſaac Newton*, that the diſtinct

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distinct and primogenial colours are only seven; but every eye can witness, that from various mixtures, in various proportions, infinite diversifications of tints may be produced. In like manner, the passions of the mind, which put the world in motion, and produce all the bustle and eagerness of the busy crowds that swarm upon the earth; the passions, from whence arise all the pleasures and pains that we see and hear of, if we analyse the mind of man, are very few; but those few agitated and combined, as external causes shall happen to operate, and modified by prevailing opinions and accidental caprices, make such frequent alterations on the surface of life, that the show, while we are busied in delineating it, vanishes from the view, and a new set of objects succeed, doomed to the same shortness of duration with the former: thus curiosity may always find employment, and the busy part of mankind will furnish the contemplative with the materials of speculation to the end of time.

The complaint, therefore, that all topicks are preoccupied, is nothing more than the murmur of ignorance or idleness, by which some discourage others and some themselves; the mutability of mankind will always furnish writers with new images, and the luxuriance of fancy may always embellish them with new decorations.

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NUMB. 99. TUESDAY, *October* 16, 1753.

— *Magnis tamen excidit ausis,* OVID.

But in the glorious enterprize he dy'd. ADDISON.

IT has always been the practice of mankind, to judge of actions by the event. The ſame attempts, conducted in the ſame manner, but terminated by different ſucceſs, produce different judgments: they who attain their wiſhes, never want celebrators of their wiſdom and their virtue; and they that miſcarry, are quickly diſcovered to have been defective not only in mental but in moral qualities. The world will never be long without ſome good reaſon to hate the unhappy: their real faults are immediately detected; and if thoſe are not ſufficient to ſink them into infamy, an additional weight of calumny will be ſuperadded: he that fails in his endeavours after wealth or power, will not long retain either honeſty or courage.

This ſpecies of injuſtice has ſo long prevailed in univerſal practice, that it ſeems likewiſe to have infected ſpeculation: ſo few minds are able to ſeparate the ideas of greatneſs and proſperity, that even Sir *William Temple* has determined, "that he who can deſerve the "name of a hero, muſt not only be virtuous but "fortunate."

By this unreaſonable diſtribution of praiſe and blame, none have ſuffered oftener than projectors, whoſe rapidity

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pidity of imagination and vaſtneſs of deſign raiſe ſuch envy in their fellow mortals, that every eye watches for their fall, and every heart exults at their diſtreſſes: yet even a projector may gain favour by ſucceſs; and the tongue that was prepared to hiſs, then endeavours to excel others in loudneſs of applauſe.

When *Coriolanus*, in *Shakeſpeare*, deſerted to *Aufidius* the *Volſcian* ſervants at firſt inſulted him, even while he ſtood under the protection of the houſehold gods; but when they ſaw that the project took effect, and the ſtranger was ſeated at the head of the table, one of them very judiciouſly obſerves, "that he always thought "there was more in him than he could think."

Machiavel has juſtly animadverted on the different notice taken by all ſucceeding times, of the two great projectors, *Catiline* and *Cæſar*. Both formed the ſame project, and intended to raiſe themſelves to power, by ſubverting the commonwealth: they purſued their deſign, perhaps, with equal abilities, and with equal virtue; but *Catiline* periſhed in the field, and *Cæſar* returned from *Pharſalia* with unlimited authority: and from that time, every monarch of the earth has thought himſelf honoured by a compariſon with *Cæſar*; and *Catiline* has been never mentioned, but that his name might be applied to traitors and incendiaries.

In an age more remote, *Xerxes* projected the conqueſt of *Greece*, and brought down the power of *Aſia* againſt it: but after the world had been filled with expectation and terrour, his army was beaten, his fleet was deſtroyed, and *Xerxes* has been never mentioned without contempt.

A few

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A few years afterwards, *Greece* likewiſe had her turn of giving birth to a projector; who invading *Aſia* with a ſmall army, went forward in ſearch of adventures, and by his eſcape from one danger, gained only more raſhneſs to ruſh into another: he ſtormed city after city, overran kingdom after kingdom, fought battles only for barren victory, and invaded nations only that he might make his way through them to new invaſions: but having been fortunate in the execution of his projects, he died with the name of *Alexander the Great*.

Theſe are, indeed, events of ancient times; but human nature is always the ſame, and every age will afford us inſtances of publick cenſures influenced by events. The great buſineſs of the middle centuries, was the holy war; which undoubtedly was a noble project, and was for a long time proſecuted with a ſpirit equal to that with which it had been contrived: but the ardour of the *European* heroes only hurried them to deſtruction; for a long time they could not gain the territories for which they fought, and, when at laſt gained, they could not keep them: their expeditions, therefore, have been the ſcoff of idleneſs and ignorance, their underſtanding and their virtue have been equally vilified, their conduct has been ridiculed, and their cauſe has been defamed.

When *Columbus* had engaged king *Ferdinand* in the diſcovery of the other hemiſphere, the ſailors, with whom he embarked in the expedition, had ſo little confidence in their commander, that after having been long at ſea looking for coaſts which they expected never to find, they raiſed a general mutiny, and demanded to return. He found means to ſooth them into a permiſſion

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miſſion to continue the ſame courſe three days longer, and on the evening of the third day deſcried land. Had the impatience of his crew denied him a few hours of the time requeſted, what had been his fate but to have come back with the infamy of a vain projector, who had betrayed the king's credulity to uſeleſs expenſes, and riſked his life in ſeeking countries that had no exiſtence? how would thoſe that had rejected his propoſals have triumphed in their acuteneſs? and when would his name have been mentioned, but with the makers of potable gold and malleable glaſs?

The laſt royal projectors with whom the world has been troubled, were *Charles* of *Sweden* and the *Czar* of *Muſcovy*. *Charles*, if any judgment may be formed of his deſigns by his meaſures and his inquiries, had purpoſed firſt to dethrone the *Czar*, then to lead his army through pathleſs deſerts into *China*, thence to make his way by the ſword through the whole circuit of *Aſia*, and by the conqueſt of *Turkey* to unite *Sweden* with his new dominions: but this mighty project was cruſhed at *Pultowa*; and *Charles* has ſince been conſidered as a madman by thoſe powers, who ſent their ambaſſadors to ſolicit his friendſhip, and their generals "to learn under him the art of war."

The *Czar* found employment ſufficient in his own dominions, and amuſed himſelf in digging canals, and building cities; murdering his ſubjects with inſufferable fatigues, and tranſplanting nations from one corner of his dominions to another, without regretting the thouſands that periſhed on the way: but he attained his end, he made his people formidable, and is numbered by fame among the demi-gods.

I am

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I am far from intending to vindicate the ſanguinary projects of heroes and conquerors, and would wiſh rather to diminiſh the reputation of their ſucceſs, than the infamy of their miſcarriages: for I cannot conceive, why he that has burnt cities, waſted nations, and filled the world with horrour and deſolation, ſhould be more kindly regarded by mankind, than he that died in the rudiments of wickedneſs; why he that accompliſhed miſchief ſhould be glorious, and he that only endeavoured it ſhould be criminal. I would wiſh *Cæſar* and *Catiline*, *Xerxes* and *Alexander*, *Charles* and *Peter*, huddled together in obſcurity or deteſtation.

But there is another ſpecies of projectors, to whom I would willingly conciliate mankind; whoſe ends are generally laudable, and whoſe labours are innocent; who are ſearching out new powers of nature, or contriving new works of art; but who are yet perſecuted with inceſſant obloquy, and whom the univerſal contempt with which they are treated, often debars from that ſucceſs which their induſtry would obtain, if it were permitted to act without oppoſition.

They who find themſelves inclined to cenſure new undertakings, only becauſe they are new, ſhould conſider, that the folly of projection is very ſeldom the folly of a fool; it is commonly the ebullition of a capacious mind, crowded with variety of knowledge, and heated with intenſeneſs of thought; it proceeds often from the conſciouſneſs of uncommon powers, from the confidence of thoſe, who having already done much, are eaſily perſuaded that they can do more. When *Rowley* had completed the orrery, he attempted the perpetual

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perpetual motion; when *Boyle* had exhauſted the ſecrets of vulgar chymiſtry, he turned his thoughts to the work of tranſmutation.

A projector generally unites thoſe qualities which have the faireſt claim to veneration, extent of knowledge, and greatneſs of deſign: it was ſaid of *Catiline*, "immoderata, incredibilia, nimis alta ſemper cupi-"ebat." Projectors of all kinds agree in their intellects, though they differ in their morals; they all fail by attempting things beyond their power, by deſpiſing vulgar attainments, and aſpiring to performances to which perhaps nature has not proportioned the force of man: when they fail, therefore, they fail not by idleneſs or timidity, but by raſh adventure and fruitleſs diligence.

That the attempts of ſuch men will often miſcarry, we may reaſonably expect; yet from ſuch men, and ſuch only, are we to hope for the cultivation of thoſe parts of nature which lie yet waſte, and the invention of thoſe arts which are yet wanting to the felicity of life. If they are, therefore, univerſally diſcouraged, art and diſcovery can make no advances. Whatever is attempted without previous certainty of ſucceſs, may be conſidered as a project, and amongſt narrow minds may, therefore, expoſe its author to cenſure and contempt; and if the liberty of laughing be once indulged, every man will laugh at what he does not underſtand, every project will be conſidered as madneſs, and every great or new deſign will be cenſured as a project. Men, unaccuſtomed to reaſon and reſearches, think every enterpriſe impracticable, which

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which is extended beyond common effects, or compriſes many intermediate operations. Many that preſume to laugh at projectors, would conſider a flight through the air in a winged chariot, and the movement of a mighty engine by the ſteam of water, as equally the dreams of mechanic lunacy; and would hear, with equal negligence, of the union of the *Thames* and *Severn* by a canal, and the ſcheme of *Albuquerque*, the Viceroy of the *Indies*, who in the rage of hoſtility had contrived to make *Egypt* a barren deſert, by turning the *Nile* into the *Red Sea*.

Thoſe who have attempted much, have ſeldom failed to perform more than thoſe who never deviate from the common roads of action: many valuable preparations of chymiſtry are ſuppoſed to have riſen from unſucceſsful inquiries after the grand elixir: it is, therefore, juſt to encourage thoſe who endeavour to enlarge the power of art, ſince they often ſucceed beyond expectation; and when they fail, may ſometimes benefit the world even by their miſcarriages.

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NUMB. 102. SATURDAY, *October* 27, 1753.

——— *Quid tam dextro pede concipis, ut te*
Conatus non pœniteat votique peracti? JUV.

What in the conduct of our life appears
So well deſign'd, ſo luckily begun,
But, when we have our wiſh, we wiſh undone. DRYDEN.

To the ADVENTURER.

SIR,

I HAVE been for many years a trader in *London*. My beginning was narrow, and my ſtock ſmall; I was, therefore, a long time brow-beaten and deſpiſed by thoſe, who having more money thought they had more merit than myſelf. I did not, however, ſuffer my reſentment to inſtigate me to any mean arts of ſupplantation, nor my eagerneſs of riches to betray me to any indirect methods of gain; I purſued my buſineſs with inceſſant aſſiduity, ſupported by the hope of being one day richer than thoſe who contemned me; and had, upon every annual review of my books, the ſatisfaction of finding my fortune increaſed beyond my expectation.

In a few years my induſtry and probity were fully recompenſed, my wealth was really great, and my reputation for wealth ſtill greater. I had large warehouſes crowded with goods, and conſiderable ſums in the publick funds; I was careſſed upon the *Exchange*

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by the moſt eminent merchants; became the oracle of the common council; was ſolicited to engage in all commercial undertakings; was flattered with the hopes of becoming in a ſhort time one of the directors of a wealthy company, and, to compleſe my mercantile honours, enjoyed the expenſive happineſs of fining for ſheriff.

Riches you know, eaſily produce riches: when I had arrived to this degree of wealth, I had no longer any obſtruction or oppoſition to fear; new acquiſitions were hourly brought within my reach, and I continued for ſome years longer to heap thouſands upon thouſands.

At laſt I reſolved to complete the circle of a citizen's proſperity by the purchaſe of an eſtate in the country, and to cloſe my life in retirement. From the hour that this deſign entered my imagination, I found the fatigues of my employment every day more oppreſſive, and perſuaded myſelf that I was no longer equal to perpetual attention, and that my health would ſoon be deſtroyed by the torment and diſtraction of extenſive buſineſs. I could image to myſelf no happineſs, but in vacant jollity, and uninterrupted leiſure; nor entertain my friends with any other topick, than the vexation and uncertainty of trade, and the happineſs of rural privacy.

But notwithſtanding theſe declarations, I could not at once reconcile myſelf to the thoughts of ceaſing to get money; and though I was every day inquiring for a purchaſe, I found ſome reaſon for rejecting all that were offered me; and, indeed, had accumulated ſo many beauties and conveniencies in my idea of the ſpot where I was finally to be happy, that, perhaps, the world

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world might have been travelled over, without diſcovery of a place which would not have been defective in ſome particular.

Thus I went on ſtill talking of retirement, and ſtill refuſing to retire; my friends began to laugh at my delays, and I grew aſhamed to trifle longer with my own inclinations; an eſtate was at length purchaſed, I transferred my ſtock to a prudent young man who had married my daughter, went down into the country, and commenced lord of a ſpacious manor.

Here for ſome time I found happineſs equal to my expectation. I reformed the old houſe according to the advice of the beſt architects, I threw down the walls of the garden, and encloſed it with paliſades, planted long avenues of trees, filled a greenhouſe with exotick plants, dug a new canal, and threw the earth into the old moat.

The fame of theſe expenſive improvements brought in all the country to ſee the ſhow. I entertained my viſitors with great liberality, led them round my gardens, ſhowed them my apartments, laid before them plans for new decorations, and was gratified by the wonder of ſome and the envy of others.

I was envied; but how little can one man judge of the condition of another! The time was now coming, in which affluence and ſplendour could no longer make me pleaſed with myſelf. I had built till the imagination of the architect was exhauſted; I had added one convenience to another, till I knew not what more to wiſh or to deſign; I had laid out my gardens, planted my park, and completed my waterworks; and what now remained to be done? what, but to look up to

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turrets, of which when they were once raiſed I had no further uſe, to range over apartments where time was tarniſhing the furniture, to ſtand by the caſcade of which I ſcarcely now perceived the ſound, and to watch the growth of woods that muſt give their ſhade to a diſtant generation.

In this gloomy inactivity, is every day begun and ended: the happineſs that I have been ſo long procuring is now at an end, becauſe it has been procured; I wander from room to room till I am weary of myſelf; I ride out to a neighbouring hill in the centre of my eſtate, from whence all my lands lie in proſpect round me; I ſee nothing that I have not ſeen before, and return home diſappointed, though I knew that I had nothing to expect.

In my happy days of buſineſs I had been accuſtomed to riſe early in the morning; and remember the time when I grieved that the night came ſo ſoon upon me, and obliged me for a few hours to ſhut out affluence and proſperity. I now ſeldom ſee the riſing ſun, but to "tell him," with the fallen angel, "how "I hate his beams." I awake from ſleep as to languor or impriſonment, and have no employment for the firſt hour but to conſider by what art I ſhall rid myſelf of the ſecond. I protract the breakfaſt as long as I can, becauſe when it is ended I have no call for my attention, till I can with ſome degree of decency grow impatient for my dinner. If I could dine all my life, I ſhould be happy; I eat not becauſe I am hungry, but becauſe I am idle: but, alas! the time quickly comes when I can eat no longer; and ſo ill does my conſtitution ſecond my inclination, that I cannot

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cannot bear ſtrong liquors: ſeven hours muſt then be endured before I ſhall ſup; but ſupper comes at laſt, the more welcome as it is in a ſhort time ſucceeded by ſleep.

Such, Mr. *Adventurer*, is the happineſs, the hope of which ſeduced me from the duties and pleaſures of a mercantile life. I ſhall be told by thoſe who read my narrative, that there are many means of innocent amuſement, and many ſchemes of uſeful employment, which I do not appear ever to have known; and that nature and art have provided pleaſures, by which, without the drudgery of ſettled buſineſs, the active may be engaged, the ſolitary ſoothed, and the ſocial entertained.

Theſe arts, Sir, I have tried. When firſt I took poſſeſſion of my eſtate, in conformity to the taſte of my neighbours, I bought guns and nets, filled my kennel with dogs and my ſtable with horſes: but a little experience ſhowed me, that theſe inſtruments of rural felicity would afford me few gratifications. I never ſhot but to miſs the mark, and, to confeſs the truth, was afraid of the fire of my own gun. I could diſcover no muſick in the cry of the dogs, nor could diveſt myſelf of pity for the animal whoſe peaceful and inoffenſive life was ſacrificed to our ſport. I was not, indeed, always at leiſure to reflect upon her danger; for my horſe, who had been bred to the chaſe, did not always regard my choice either of ſpeed or way, but leaped hedges and ditches at his own diſcretion, and hurried me along with the dogs, to the great diverſion of my brother ſportſmen. His eager-

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neſs of purſuit once incited him to ſwim a river; and I had leiſure to reſolve in the water, that I would never hazard my life again for the deſtruction of a hare.

I then ordered books to be procured, and by the direction of the vicar had in a few weeks a cloſet elegantly furniſhed. You will, perhaps, be ſurpriſed when I ſhall tell you, that when once I had ranged them according to their ſizes, and piled them up in regular gradations, I had received all the pleaſure which they could give me. I am not able to excite in myſelf any curioſity after events which have been long paſſed, and in which I can therefore have no intereſt; I am utterly unconcerned to know whether *Tully* or *Demoſthenes* excelled in oratory, whether *Hannibal* loſt *Italy* by his own negligence or the corruption of his countrymen. I have no ſkill in controverſial learning, nor can conceive why ſo many volumes ſhould have been written upon queſtions, which I have lived ſo long and ſo happily without underſtanding. I once reſolved to go through the volumes relating to the office of juſtice of the peace, but found them ſo crabbed and intricate, that in leſs than a month I deſiſted in deſpair, and reſolved to ſupply my deficiencies by paying a competent ſalary to a ſkilful clerk.

I am naturally inclined to hoſpitality, and for ſome time kept up a conſtant intercourſe of viſits with the neighbouring gentlemen: but though they are eaſily brought about me by better wine than they can find at any other houſe, I am not much relieved by their converſation; they have no ſkill in commerce or the ſtocks,

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ſtocks, and I have no knowledge of the hiſtory of families or the factions of the country; ſo that when the firſt civilities are over, they uſually talk to one another, and I am left alone in the midſt of the company. Though I cannot drink myſelf, I am obliged to encourage the circulation of the glaſs; their mirth grows more turbulent and obſtreperous; and before their merriment is at an end, I am ſick with diſguſt, and, perhaps, reproached with my ſobriety, or by ſome ſly inſinuations inſulted as a cit.

Such, Mr. *Adventurer*, is the life to which I am condemned by a fooliſh endeavour to be happy by imitation; ſuch is the happineſs to which I pleaſed myſelf with approaching, and which I conſidered as the chief end of my cares and my labours. I toiled year after year with cheerfulneſs, in expectation of the happy hour in which I might be idle; the privilege of idleneſs is attained, but has not brought with it the bleſſing of tranquillity.

I am,

Yours, &c.

MERCATOR.

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NUMB. 107. TUESDAY, *November* 13, 1753.

——*Sub judice lis eſt.* HOR.

And of their vain diſputings find no end. FRANCIS.

IT has been ſometimes aſked by thoſe, who find the appearance of wiſdom more eaſily attained by queſtions than ſolutions, how it comes to paſs, that the world is divided by ſuch difference of opinion; and why men, equally reaſonable, and equally lovers of truth, do not always think in the ſame manner?

With regard to ſimple propoſitions, where the terms are underſtood, and the whole ſubject is comprehended at once, there is ſuch an uniformity of ſentiment among all human beings, that, for many ages, a very numerous ſet of notions were ſuppoſed to be innate, or neceſſarily coexiſtent with the faculty of reaſon: it being imagined, that univerſal agreement could proceed only from the invariable dictates of the univerſal parent.

In queſtions diffuſe and compounded, this ſimilarity of determination is no longer to be expected. At our firſt ſally into the intellectual world, we all march together along one ſtraight and open road; but as we proceed further, and wider proſpects open to our view, every eye fixes upon a different ſcene; we divide into various paths, and, as we move forward, are ſtill at a greater diſtance from each other. As a queſtion be-

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comes more complicated and involved, and extends to a greater number of relations, diſagreement of opinion will always be multiplied; not becauſe we are irrational, but becauſe we are finite beings, furniſhed with different kinds of knowledge, exerting different degrees of attention, one diſcovering conſequences which eſcape another, none taking in the whole concatenation of cauſes and effects, and moſt comprehending but a very ſmall part, each comparing what he obſerves with a different criterion, and each referring it to a different purpoſe.

Where, then, is the wonder, that they who ſee only a ſmall part ſhould judge erroneouſly of the whole? or that they, who ſee different and diſſimilar parts, ſhould judge differently from each other?

Whatever has various reſpects, muſt have various appearances of good and evil, beauty or deformity; thus, the gardener tears up as a weed, the plant which the phyſician gathers as a medicine; and "a general," ſays Sir *Kenelm Digby*, "will look with pleaſure over "a plain, as a fit place on which the fate of empires "might be decided in battle, which the farmer will "deſpiſe as bleak and barren, neither fruitful of paſ-"turage, nor fit for tillage."

Two men examining the ſame queſtion proceed commonly like the phyſician and gardener in ſelecting herbs, or the farmer and hero looking on the plain; they bring minds impreſſed with different notions, and direct their inquiries to different ends; they form, therefore, contrary concluſions, and each wonders at the other's abſurdity.

We

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We have leſs reaſon to be ſurpriſed or offended when we find others differ from us in opinion, becauſe we very often differ from ourſelves. How often we alter our minds, we do not always remark; becauſe the change is ſometimes made imperceptibly and gradually, and the laſt conviction effaces all memory of the former: yet every man, accuſtomed from time to time to take a ſurvey of his own notions, will by a ſlight retroſpection be able to diſcover, that his mind has ſuffered many revolutions; that the ſame things have in the ſeveral parts of his life been condemned and approved, purſued and ſhunned; and that on many occaſions, even when his practice has been ſteady, his mind has been wavering, and he has perſiſted in a ſcheme of action, rather becauſe he feared the cenſure of inconſtancy, than becauſe he was always pleaſed with his own choice.

Of the different faces ſhown by the ſame objects as they are viewed on oppoſite ſides, and of the different inclinations which they muſt conſtantly raiſe in him that contemplates them, a more ſtriking example cannot eaſily be found than two *Greek* epigrammatiſts will afford us in their accounts of human life, which I ſhall lay before the reader in *Engliſh* proſe.

Poſidippus, a comick poet, utters this complaint; "Through which of the paths of life is it eligible to "paſs? In publick aſſemblies are debates and trouble-"ſome affairs: domeſtick privacies are haunted with "anxieties; in the country is labour; on the ſea is "terrour: in a foreign land, he that has money muſt "live in fear, he that wants it muſt pine in diſtreſs;

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" are you married? you are troubled with ſuſpicions;
" are you ſingle? you languiſh in ſolitude; children
" occaſion toil, and a childleſs life is a ſtate of deſtitu-
" tion; the time of youth is a time of folly, and gray
" hairs are loaded with infirmity. This choice only,
" therefore, can be made, either never to receive
" being, or immediately to loſe it."

Such and ſo gloomy is the proſpect, which *Poſidippus* has laid before us. But we are not to acquieſce too haſtily in his determination againſt the value of exiſtence: for *Metrodorus*, a philoſopher of *Athens*, has ſhown, that life has pleaſures as well as pains; and having exhibited the preſent ſtate of man in brighter colours, draws with equal appearance of reaſon, a contrary concluſion.

" You may paſs well through any of the paths of
" life. In publick aſſemblies are honours and tranſ-
" actions of wiſdom; in domeſtick privacy is ſtillneſs
" and quiet: in the country are the beauties of nature;
" on the ſea is the hope of gain; in a foreign land,
" he that is rich is honoured, he that is poor may
" keep his poverty ſecret; are you married? you have
" a cheerful houſe; are you ſingle? you are unin-
" cumbered; children are objects of affection, to be
" without children is to be without care: the time of
" youth is the time of vigour, and gray hairs are made
" venerable by piety. It will, therefore, never be a
" wiſe man's choice, either not to obtain exiſtence, or
" to loſe it; for every ſtate of life has its felicity."

In theſe epigrams are included moſt of the queſtions which have engaged the ſpeculations of the inquirers after happineſs; and though they will not much aſſiſt our

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our determinations, they may, perhaps, equally promote our quiet, by ſhowing that no abſolute determination ever can be formed.

Whether a publick ſtation, or private life be deſirable, has always been debated. We ſee here both the allurements and diſcouragements of civil employments: on one ſide there is trouble, on the other honour; the management of affairs is vexatious and difficult, but it is the only duty in which wiſdom can be conſpicuouſly diſplayed; it muſt then ſtill be left to every man to chooſe either eaſe or glory; nor can any general precept be given, ſince no man can be happy by the preſcription of another.

Thus, what is ſaid of children by *Poſidippus*, "that "they are occaſions of fatigue," and by *Metrodorus*, "that they are objects of affection," is equally certain; but whether they will give moſt pain or pleaſure, muſt depend on their future conduct and diſpoſitions, on many cauſes over which the parent can have little influence: there is, therefore, room for all the caprices of imagination, and deſire muſt be proportioned to the hope or fear that ſhall happen to predominate.

Such is the uncertainty in which we are always likely to remain with regard to queſtions wherein we have moſt intereſt, and which every day affords us freſh opportunity to examine: we may examine, indeed, but we never can decide, becauſe our faculties are unequal to the ſubject: we ſee a little, and form an opinion; we ſee more, and change it.

This inconſtancy and unſteadineſs, to which we muſt ſo often find ourſelves liable, ought certainly to teach us moderation and forbearance towards thoſe who cannot

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cannot accommodate themſeves to our ſentiments: if they are deceived, we have no right to attribute their miſtake to obſtinacy or negligence, becauſe we likewiſe have been miſtaken; we may, perhaps, again change our own opinion; and what excuſe ſhall we be able to find for averſion and malignity conceived againſt him, whom we ſhall then find to have committed no fault, and who offended us only by refuſing to follow us into errour?

It may likewiſe contribute to ſoften that reſentment which pride naturally raiſes againſt oppoſition, if we conſider, that he who differs from us, does not always contradict us; he has one view of an object, and we have another; each deſcribes what he ſees with equal fidelity, and each regulates his ſteps by his own eyes: one man with *Poſidippus*, looks on celibacy as a ſtate of gloomy ſolitude, without a partner in joy, or a comforter in ſorrow; the other conſiders it, with *Metrodorus*, as a ſtate free from incumbrances, in which a man is at liberty to chooſe his own gratifications, to remove from place to place in queſt of pleaſure, and to think of nothing but merriment and diverſion: full of theſe notions one haſtens to chooſe a wife, and the other laughs at his raſhneſs, or pities his ignorance; yet it is poſſible that each is right, but that each is right only for himſelf.

Life is not the object of ſcience: we ſee a little, very little; and what is beyond we only can conjecture. If we inquire of thoſe who have gone before us, we receive ſmall ſatisfaction; ſome have travelled life without obſervation, and ſome willingly miſlead us. The only thought, therefore, on which we can repoſe

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repoſe with comfort, is that which preſents to us the care of Providence, whoſe eye takes in the whole of things, and under whoſe direction all involuntary errours will terminate in happineſs.

NUMB. 108. SATURDAY, *November* 17, 1753.

Nobis, cum ſimul occidit brevis lux,
Nox eſt perpetuo una dormienda. CATULLUS.

When once the ſhort-liv'd mortal dies,
A night eternal ſeals his eyes. ADDISON.

IT may have been obſerved by every reader, that there are certain topicks which never are exhauſted. Of ſome images and ſentiments the mind of man may be ſaid to be enamoured; it meets them, however often they occur, with the ſame ardour which a lover feels at the ſight of his miſtreſs, and parts from them with the ſame regret when they can no longer be enjoyed.

Of this kind are many deſcriptions which the poets have tranſcribed from each other, and their ſucceſſors will probably copy to the end of time; which will continue to engage, or as the *French* term it, to flatter the imagination, as long as human nature ſhall remain the ſame.

When a poet mentions the ſpring, we know that the zephyrs are about to whiſper, that the groves are to recover their verdure, the linnets to warble forth their notes of love, and the flocks and herds to frisk over

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over vales painted with flowers: yet, who is there ſo inſenſible of the beauties of nature, ſo little delighted with the renovation of the world, as not to feel his heart bound at the mention of the ſpring?

When night overſhadows a romantick ſcene, all is ſtillneſs, ſilence, and quiet; the poets of the grove ceaſe their melody, the moon towers over the world in gentle majeſty, men forget their labours and their cares, and every paſſion and purſuit is for a while ſuſpended. All this we know already, yet we hear it repeated without wearineſs; becauſe ſuch is generally the life of man, that he is pleaſed to think on the time when he ſhall pauſe from a ſenſe of his condition.

When a poetical grove invites us to its covert, we know that we ſhall find what we have already ſeen, a limpid brook murmuring over pebbles, a bank diverſified with flowers, a green arch that excludes the ſun, and a natural grot ſhaded with myrtles; yet who can forbear to enter the pleaſing gloom, to enjoy coolneſs and privacy, and gratify himſelf once more by ſcenes with which nature has formed him to be delighted?

Many moral ſentiments likewiſe are ſo adapted to our ſtate, that we find approbation whenever they ſolicit it, and are ſeldom read without exciting a gentle emotion in the mind: ſuch is the compariſon of the life of man with the duration of a flower, a thought which perhaps every nation has heard warbled in its own language, from the inſpired poets of the *Hebrews* to our own times: yet this compariſon muſt always pleaſe, becauſe every heart feels its juſtneſs, and every hour confirms it by example.

Such,

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Such, likewiſe, is the precept that directs us to uſe the preſent hour, and refer nothing to a diſtant time, which we are uncertain whether we ſhall reach: this every moraliſt may venture to inculcate, becauſe it will always be approved, and becauſe it is always forgotten.

This rule is, indeed, every day enforced, by arguments more powerful than the diſſertations of moraliſts: we ſee men pleaſing themſelves with future happineſs, fixing a certain hour for the completion of their wiſhes, and periſhing ſome at a greater and ſome at a leſs diſtance from the happy time; all complaining of their diſappointments, and lamenting that they had ſuffered the years which Heaven allowed them, to paſs without improvement, and deferred the principal purpoſe of their lives to the time when life itſelf was to forſake them.

It is not only uncertain, whether, through all the caſualties and dangers which beſet the life of man, we ſhall be able to reach the time appointed for happineſs or wiſdom; but it is likely, that whatever now hinders us from doing that which our reaſon and conſcience declare neceſſary to be done, will equally obſtruct us in times to come. It is eaſy for the imagination, operating on things not yet exiſting, to pleaſe itſelf with ſcenes of unmingled felicity, or plan out courſes of uniform virtue: but good and evil are in real life inſeparably united; habits grow ſtronger by indulgence; and reaſon loſes her dignity, in proportion as ſhe has oftener yielded to temptation: "he "that cannot live well to-day," ſays *Martial*, "will "be leſs qualified to live well to-morrow."

Of

Of the uncertainty of every human good, every human being ſeems to be convinced; yet this uncertainty is voluntarily increaſed by unneceſſary delay, whether we reſpect external cauſes, or conſider the nature of our own minds. He that now feels a deſire to do right, and wiſhes to regulate his life according to his reaſon, is not ſure that, at any future time aſſignable, he ſhall be able to rekindle the ſame ardour; he that has now an opportunity offered him of breaking looſe from vice and folly, cannot know, but that he ſhall hereafter be more entangled, and ſtruggle for freedom without obtaining it.

We are ſo unwilling to believe any thing to our own diſadvantage, that we will always imagine the perſpicacity of our judgment and the ſtrength of our reſolution more likely to increaſe than to grow leſs by time; and, therefore, conclude, that the will to purſue laudable purpoſes, will be always ſeconded by the power.

But however we may be deceived in calculating the ſtrength of our faculties, we cannot doubt the uncertainty of that life in which they muſt be employed: we ſee every day the unexpected death of our friends and our enemies, we ſee new graves hourly opened for men older and younger than ourſelves, for the cautious and the careleſs, the diſſolute and the temperate, for men who like us were providing to enjoy or improve hours now irreverſibly cut off; we ſee all this, and yet, inſtead of living, let year glide after year in preparations to live.

Men are ſo frequently cut off in the midſt of their projections, that ſudden death cauſes little emotion

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in them that behold it, unleſs it be impreſſed upon the attention by uncommon circumſtances. I, like every other man, have outlived multitudes, have ſeen ambition ſink in its triumphs, and beauty periſh in its bloom; but have been ſeldom ſo much affected as by the fate of *Euryalus*, whom I lately loſt as I began to love him.

Euryalus had for ſome time flouriſhed in a lucrative profeſſion; but having ſuffered his imagination to be fired by an unextinguiſhable curioſity, he grew weary of the ſame dull round of life, reſolved to haraſs himſelf no longer with the drudgery of getting money, but to quit his buſineſs and his profit, and enjoy for a few years the pleaſures of travel. His friends heard him proclaim his reſolution without ſuſpecting that he intended to purſue it: but he was conſtant to his purpoſe, and with great expedition cloſed his accounts and ſold his movables, paſſed a few days in bidding farewell to his companions, and with all the eagerneſs of romantick chivalry croſſed the ſea in ſearch of happineſs. Whatever place was renowned in ancient or modern hiſtory, whatever region art or nature had diſtinguiſhed, he determined to viſit: full of deſign and hope he landed on the continent; his friends expected accounts from him of the new ſcenes that opened in his progreſs, but were informed in a few days that *Euryalus* was dead.

Such was the end of *Euryalus*. He is entered that ſtate, whence none ever ſhall return; and can now only benefit his friends, by remaining in their memories a permanent and efficacious inſtance of the blindneſs

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blindneſs of deſire, and the uncertainty of all terreſtrial good. But, perhaps, every man has like me loſt an *Euryalus*, has known a friend die with happineſs in his graſp; and yet every man continues to think himſelf ſecure of life, and defers to ſome future time of leiſure what he knows it will be fatal to have finally omitted.

It is, indeed, with this as with other frailties inherent in our nature; the deſire of deferring in another time, what cannot be done without endurance of ſome pain, or forbearance of ſome pleaſure, will, perhaps, never be totally overcome or ſuppreſſed; there will always be ſomething that we ſhall wiſh to have finiſhed, and be nevertheleſs unwilling to begin: but againſt this unwillingneſs it is our duty to ſtruggle, and every conqueſt over our paſſions will make way for an eaſier conqueſt: cuſtom is equally forcible to bad and good; nature will always be at variance with reaſon, but will rebel more feebly as ſhe is oftener ſubdued.

The common neglect of the preſent hour is more ſhameful and criminal, as no man is betrayed to it by errour, but admits it by negligence. Of the inſtability of life, the weakeſt underſtanding never thinks wrong, though the ſtrongeſt often omits to think juſtly: reaſon and experience are always ready to inform us of our real ſtate; but we refuſe to liſten to their ſuggeſtions, becauſe we feel our hearts unwilling to obey them: but, ſurely, nothing is more unworthy of a reaſonable being, than to ſhut his eyes, when he ſees the road which he is commanded to

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travel, that he may deviate with fewer reproaches from himſelf; nor could any motive to tenderneſs, except the conſciouſneſs that we have all been guilty of the ſame fault, diſpoſe us to pity thoſe who thus conſign themſelves to voluntary ruin.

NUMB. 111. TUESDAY, *November* 27, 1753.

——— *Quæ non fecimus ipſi.*
Vix ea noſtra voco. OVID.

The deeds of long deſcended anceſtors
Are but by grace of imputation ours. DRYDEN.

THE evils inſeparably annexed to the preſent condition of man, are ſo numerous and afflictive, that it has been, from age to age, the taſk of ſome to bewail, and of others to ſolace them; and he, therefore, will be in danger of ſeeing a common enemy, who ſhall attempt to depreciate the few pleaſures and felicities which nature has allowed us.

Yet I will confeſs, that I have ſometimes employed my thoughts in examining the pretenſions that are made to happineſs, by the ſplendid and envied condition of life; and have not thought the hour unprofitably ſpent, when I have detected the impoſture of counterfeit advantages, and found diſquiet lurking under falſe appearances of gayety and greatneſs.

It

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It is aſſerted by a tragick poet, that "eſt miſer "nemo niſi comparatus," "no man is miſerable, but "as he is compared with others happier than him-"ſelf:" this poſition is not ſtrictly and philoſophically true. He might have ſaid, with rigorous propriety, that no man is happy but as he is compared with the miſerable; for ſuch is the ſtate of this world, that we find in it abſolute miſery, but happineſs only comparative; we may incur as much pain as we can poſſibly endure, though we can never obtain as much happineſs as we might poſſibly enjoy.

Yet it is certain likewiſe, that many of our miſeries are merely comparative: we are often made unhappy, not by the preſence of any real evil, but by the abſence of ſome fictitious good; of ſomething which is not required by any real want of nature, which has not in itſelf any power of gratification, and which neither reaſon nor fancy would have prompted us to wiſh, did we not ſee it in the poſſeſſion of others.

For a mind diſeaſed with vain longings after unattainable advantages, no medicine can be preſcribed, but an impartial inquiry into the real worth of that which is ſo ardently deſired. It is well known, how much the mind, as well as the eye, is deceived by diſtance; and, perhaps, it will be found, that of many imagined bleſſings it may be doubted, whether he that wants or poſſeſſes them has more reaſon to be ſatisfied with his lot.

The dignity of high birth and long extraction, no man, to whom nature has denied it, can confer upon himſelf; and, therefore, it deſerves to be conſidered, whether the want of that which can never be gained,

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may not eaſily be endured. It is true, that if we conſider the triumph and delight with which moſt of thoſe recount their anceſtors who have anceſtors to recount, and the artifices by which ſome who have riſen to unexpected fortune endeavour to inſert themſelves into an honourable ſtem, we ſhall be inclined to fancy that wiſdom or virtue may be had by inheritance, or that all the excellencies of a line of progenitors are accumulated on their deſcendant. Reaſon, indeed, will ſoon inform us, that our eſtimation of birth is arbitrary and capricious, and that dead anceſtors can have no influence but upon imagination: let it then be examined, whether one dream may not operate in the place of another; whether he that owes nothing to forefathers, may not receive equal pleaſure from the conſciouſneſs of owing all to himſelf; whether he may not, with a little meditation, find it more honourable to found than to continue a family, and to gain dignity than tranſmit it; whether, if he receives no dignity from the virtues of his family, he does not likewiſe eſcape the danger of being diſgraced by their crimes; and whether he that brings a new name into the world, has not the convenience of playing the game of life without a ſtake, and opportunity of winning much though he has nothing to loſe.

There is another opinion concerning happineſs, which approaches much more nearly to univerſality, but which may, perhaps, with equal reaſon be diſputed. The pretenſions to anceſtral honours many of the ſons of earth eaſily ſee to be ill-grounded; but all agree to celebrate the advantage of hereditary riches, and to conſider thoſe as the minions of fortune,

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tune, who are wealthy from their cradles, whoſe eſtate is "res non parta labore ſed relicta;" "the acquiſi-"tion of another, not of themſelves;" and whom a father's induſtry has diſpenſed from a laborious attention to arts or commerce, and left at liberty to diſpoſe of life as fancy ſhall direct them.

If every man were wiſe and virtuous, capable to diſcern the beſt uſe of time, and reſolute to practiſe it; it might be granted, I think, without heſitation, that total liberty would be a bleſſing; and that it would be deſirable to be left at large to the exerciſe of religious and ſocial duties, without the interruption of importunate avocations.

But ſince felicity is relative, and that which is the means of happineſs to one man may be to another the cauſe of miſery, we are to conſider, what ſtate is beſt adapted to human nature in its preſent degeneracy and frailty. And, ſurely, to far the greater number it is highly expedient, that they ſhould by ſome ſettled ſcheme of duties be reſcued from the tyranny of caprice, that they ſhould be driven on by neceſſity through the paths of life with their attention confined to a ſtated taſk, that they may be leſs at leiſure to deviate into miſchief at the call of folly.

When we obſerve the lives of thoſe whom an ample inheritance has let looſe to their own direction, what do we diſcover that can excite our envy? Their time ſeems not to paſs with much applauſe from others, or ſatisfaction to themſelves: many ſquander their exuberance of fortune in luxury and debauchery, and have no other uſe of money than to inflame their paſſions, and riot in a wide range of licentiouſneſs; others, leſs

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criminal indeed, but ſurely, not much to be praiſed, lie down to ſleep, and riſe up to trifle, are employed every morning in finding expedients to rid themſelves of the day, chaſe pleaſure through all the places of publick reſort, fly from *London* to *Bath*, and from *Bath* to *London*, without any other reaſon for changing place, but that they go in queſt of company as idle and as vagrant as themſelves, always endeavouring to raiſe ſome new deſire that they may have ſomething to purſue, to rekindle ſome hope which they know will be diſappointed, changing one amuſement for another which a few months will make equally inſipid, or ſinking into languor and diſeaſe for want of ſomething to actuate their bodies or exhilarate their minds.

Whoever has frequented thoſe places, where idlers aſſemble to eſcape from ſolitude, knows that this is generally the ſtate of the wealthy; and from this ſtate it is no great hardſhip to be debarred. No man can be happy in total idleneſs: he that ſhould be condemned to lie torpid and motionleſs, "would fly for "recreation," ſays *South*, "to the mines and the gal-"leys;" and it is well, when nature or fortune find employment for thoſe, who would not have known how to procure it for themſelves.

He, whoſe mind is engaged by the acquiſition or improvement of a fortune, not only eſcapes the inſipidity of indifference, and the tedioufneſs of inactivity, but gains enjoyments wholly unknown to thoſe, who live lazily on the toil of others; for life affords no higher pleaſure than that of ſurmounting difficulties, paſſing from one ſtep of ſucceſs to another, forming new wiſhes, and ſeeing them gratified. He that labours

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in any great or laudable undertaking, has his fatigues firſt ſupported by hope, and afterwards rewarded by joy; he is always moving to a certain end, and when he has attained it, an end more diſtant invites him to a new purſuit.

It does not, indeed, always happen, that diligence is fortunate; the wiſeſt ſchemes are broken by unexpected accidents; the moſt conſtant perſeverance ſometimes toils through life without a recompenſe; but labour, though unſucceſsful, is more eligible than idleneſs; he that proſecutes a lawful purpoſe by lawful means, acts always with the approbation of his own reaſon; he is animated through the courſe of his endeavours by an expectation which, though not certain, he knows to be juſt; and is at laſt comforted in his diſappointment, by the conſciouſneſs that he has not failed by his own fault.

That kind of life is moſt happy which affords us moſt opportunities of gaining our own eſteem; and what can any man infer in his own favour from a condition to which, however proſperous, he contributed nothing, and which the vileſt and weakeſt of the ſpecies would have obtained by the ſame right, had he happened to be the ſon of the ſame father.

To ſtrive with difficulties, and to conquer them, is the higheſt human felicity; the next, is to ſtrive, and deſerve to conquer: but he whoſe life has paſſed without a conteſt, and who can boaſt neither ſucceſs nor merit, can ſurvey himſelf only as a uſeleſs filler of exiſtence; and if he is content with his own character, muſt owe his ſatisfaction to inſenſibility.

Thus it appears that the ſatiriſt adviſed rightly, when he

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he directed us to reſign ourſelves to the hands of Heaven, and to leave to ſuperiour powers the determination of our lot:

Permittes ipſis expendere Numinibus, quid
Conveniat nobis, rebuſque ſit utile noſtris:
Carior eſt illis homo quam ſibi.

Intruſt thy fortune to the pow'rs above:
Leave them to manage for thee, and to grant
What their unerring wiſdom ſees thee want.
In goodneſs as in greatneſs they excel:
Ah! that we lov'd ourſelves but half ſo well.

DRYDEN.

What ſtate of life admits moſt happineſs, is uncertain; but that uncertainty ought to repreſs the petulance of compariſon, and ſilence the murmurs of diſcontent.

NUMB. 115. TUESDAY, *December* 11, 1753.

Scribimus indocti doctique. HOR.

All dare to write, who can or cannot read.

THEY who have attentively conſidered the hiſtory of mankind, know that every age has its peculiar character. At one time, no deſire is felt but for military honours; every ſummer affords battles and ſieges, and the world is filled with ravage, bloodſhed, and devaſtation: this ſanguinary fury at length ſubſides, and nations are divided into factions, by controverſies about points

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points that will never be decided. Men then grow weary of debate and altercation, and apply themſelves to the arts of profit; trading companies are formed, manufactures improved, and navigation extended; and nothing is any longer thought on, but the increaſe and preſervation of property, the artifices of getting money, and the pleaſures of ſpending it.

The preſent age, if we conſider chiefly the ſtate of our own country, may be ſtyled with great propriety *The age of Authors*; for, perhaps, there never was a time in which men of all degrees of ability, of every kind of education, of every profeſſion and employment, were poſting with ardour ſo general to the preſs. The province of writing was formerly left to thoſe, who by ſtudy, or appearance of ſtudy, were ſuppoſed to have gained knowledge unattainable by the buſy part of mankind; but in theſe enlightened days, every man is qualified to inſtruct every other man: and he that beats the anvil, or guides the plough, not content with ſupplying corporal neceſſities, amuſes himſelf in the hours of leiſure with providing intellectual pleaſures for his countrymen.

It may be obſerved, that of this, as of other evils, complaints have been made by every generation: but though it may, perhaps, be true, that at all times more have been willing than have been able to write, yet there is no reaſon for believing, that the dogmatical legions of the preſent race were ever equalled in number by any former period; for ſo widely is ſpread the itch of literary praiſe, that almoſt every man is an author, either in act or in purpoſe; has either beſtowed his favours on the publick, or withholds them, that they may

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may be more ſeaſonably offered, or made more worthy of acceptance.

In former times, the pen, like the ſword, was conſidered as conſigned by nature to the hands of men; the ladies contented themſelves with private virtues and domeſtick excellence; and a female writer, like a female warriour, was conſidered as a kind of eccentric being, that deviated, however illuſtriouſly, from her due ſphere of motion, and was, therefore, rather to be gazed at with wonder, than countenanced by imitation. But as the times paſt are ſaid to have been a nation of Amazons, who drew the bow and wielded the battle-axe, formed encampments and waſted nations; the revolution of years has now produced a generation of Amazons of the pen, who with the ſpirit of their predeceſſors have ſet maſculine tyranny at defiance, aſſerted their claim to the regions of ſcience, and ſeem reſolved to conteſt the uſurpations of virility.

Some, indeed, there are of both ſexes, who are authors only in deſire, but have not yet attained the power of executing their intentions; whoſe performances have not arrived at bulk ſufficient to form a volume, or who have not the confidence, however impatient of nameleſs obſcurity, to ſolicit openly the aſſiſtance of the printer. Among theſe are the innumerable correſpondents of publick papers, who are always offering aſſiſtance which no man will receive, and ſuggeſting hints that are never taken, and who complain loudly of the perverſeneſs and arrogance of authors, lament their inſenſibility of their own intereſt, and fill the coffee-houſes with dark ſtories of performances by eminent hands, which have been offered and rejected.

To

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To what cauſe this univerſal eagerneſs of writing can be properly aſcribed, I have not yet been able to diſcover. It is ſaid, that every art is propagated in proportion to the rewards conferred upon it; a poſition from which a ſtranger would naturally infer, that literature was now bleſſed with patronage far tranſcending the candour or munificence of the Auguſtine age, that the road to greatneſs was open to none but authors, and that by writing alone riches and honour were to be obtained.

But ſince it is true, that writers, like other competitors, are very little diſpoſed to favour one another, it is not to be expected, that at a time, when every man writes, any man will patronize; and accordingly, there is not one that I can recollect at preſent who profeſſes the leaſt regard for the votaries of ſcience, invites the addreſſes of learned men, or ſeems to hope for reputation from any pen but his own.

The cauſe, therefore, of this epidemical conſpiracy for the deſtruction of paper, muſt remain a ſecret: nor can I diſcover, whether we owe it to the influences of the conſtellations, or the intemperature of ſeaſons: whether the long continuance of the wind at any ſingle point, or intoxicating vapours exhaled from the earth, have turned our nobles and our peaſants, our ſoldiers and traders, our men and women, all into wits, philoſophers, and writers.

It is, indeed, of more importance to ſearch out the cure than the cauſe of this intellectual malady; and he would deſerve well of this country, who, inſtead of amuſing himſelf with conjectural ſpeculations, ſhould find means of perſuading the peer to inſpect his ſteward's accounts,

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accounts, or repair the rural manſion of his anceſtors, who could replace the tradeſman behind his counter, and ſend back the farmer to the mattock and the flail.

General irregularities are known in time to remedy themſelves. By the conſtitution of ancient *Ægypt*, the prieſthood was continually increaſing, till at length there was no people beſide themſelves: the eſtabliſhment was then diſſolved, and the number of prieſts was reduced and limited. Thus among us, writers will, perhaps, be multiplied, till no readers will be found, and then the ambition of writing muſt neceſſarily ceaſe.

But as it will be long before the cure is thus gradually effected, and the evil ſhould be ſtopped, if it be poſſible, before it riſes to ſo great a height, I could wiſh that both ſexes would fix their thoughts upon ſome ſalutary conſiderations, which might repreſs their ardour for that reputation which not one of many thouſands is fated to obtain.

Let it be deeply impreſſed and frequently recollected, that he who has not obtained the proper qualifications of an author, can have no excuſe for the arrogance of writing, but the power of imparting to mankind ſomething neceſſary to be known. A man uneducated or unlettered may ſometimes ſtart a uſeful thought, or make a lucky diſcovery, or obtain by chance ſome ſecret of nature, or ſome intelligence of facts, of which the moſt enlightened mind may be ignorant, and which it is better to reveal, though by a rude and unſkilful communication, than to loſe for ever by ſuppreſſing it.

But few will be juſtified by this plea; for of the innumerable books and pamphlets that have overflowed the

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the nation, ſcarce one has made any addition to real knowledge, or contained more than a tranſpoſition of common ſentiments and a repetition of common phraſes.

It will be naturally inquired, when the man who feels an inclination to write, may venture to ſuppoſe himſelf properly qualified; and, ſince every man is inclined to think well of his own intellect, by what teſt he may try his abilities, without hazarding the contempt or reſentment of the publick.

The firſt qualification of a writer, is a perfect knowledge of the ſubject which he undertakes to treat; ſince we cannot teach what we do not know, nor can properly undertake to inſtruct others while we are ourſelves in want of inſtruction. The next requiſite is, that he be maſter of the language in which he delivers his ſentiments; if he treats of ſcience and demonſtration, that he has attained a ſtyle clear, pure, nervous, and expreſſive; if his topicks be probable and perſuaſory, that he be able to recommend them by the ſuperaddition of elegance and imagery, to diſplay the colours of varied diction, and pour forth the muſick of modulated periods.

If it be again inquired, upon what principles any man ſhall conclude that he wants theſe powers, it may be readily anſwered, that no end is attained but by the proper means; he only can rationally preſume that he underſtands a ſubject, who has read and compared the writers that have hitherto diſcuſſed it, familiarized their arguments to himſelf by long meditation, conſulted the foundations of different ſyſtems, and ſeparated truth from errour by a rigorous examination.

In

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In like manner, he only has a right to ſuppoſe that he can expreſs his thoughts, whatever they are, with perſpicuity or elegance, who has carefully peruſed the beſt authors, accurately noted their diverſities of ſtyle, diligently ſelected the beſt modes of diction, and familiarized them by long habits of attentive practice.

No man is a rhetorician or philoſopher by chance. He who knows that he undertakes to write on queſtions which he has never ſtudied, may without heſitation determine, that he is about to waſte his own time and that of his reader, and expoſe himſelf to the deriſion of thoſe whom he aſpires to inſtruct: he that without forming his ſtyle by the ſtudy of the beſt models, haſtens to obtrude his compoſitions on the publick, may be certain, that whatever hope or flattery may ſuggeſt, he ſhall ſhock the learned ear with barbariſms, and contribute, wherever his work ſhall be received, to the depravation of taſte and the corruption of language.

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NUMB. 119. TUESDAY, *December* 25, 1753.

Latiùs regnes, avidum domando
Spiritum, quàm ſi Lybiam remotis
Gadibus jungas, et uterque Pœnus
Serviat uni. HOR.

By virtue's precepts to controul
The thirſty cravings of the ſoul,
Is over wider realms to reign
Unenvied monarch, than if Spain
You could to diſtant Lybia join,
And both the Carthages were thine. FRANCIS.

WHEN *Socrates* was aſked, "which of mortal men was "to be accounted neareſt to the *gods* in happineſs?" he anſwered, "that man, who is in want of the "feweſt things."

In this anſwer, *Socrates* left it to be gueſſed by his auditors, whether, by the exemption from want which was to conſtitute happineſs, he meant amplitude of poſſeſſions or contraction of deſire. And, indeed there is ſo little difference between them, that *Alexander* the Great confeſſed the inhabitant of a tub the next man to the maſter of the world; and left a declaration to future ages, that if he was not *Alexander* he ſhould wiſh to be *Diogenes*.

Theſe two ſtates, however, though they reſemble each other in their conſequence, differ widely with reſpect to the facility with which they may be attained. To make great acquiſitions can happen to very few; and in the uncertainty of human affairs, to many it will

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be incident to labour without reward, and to loſe what they already poſſeſs by endeavours to make it more: ſome will always want abilities, and others opportunities to accumulate wealth. It is therefore happy, that nature has allowed us a more certain and eaſy road to plenty; every man may grow rich by contracting his wiſhes, and by quiet acquieſcence in what has been given him ſupply the abſence of more.

Yet ſo far is almoſt every man from emulating the happineſs of the gods, by any other means than graſping at their power, that it ſeems to be the great buſineſs of life to create wants as faſt they are ſatisfied. It has been long obſerved by moraliſts, that every man ſquanders or loſes a great part of that life, of which every man knows and deplores the ſhortneſs: and it may be remarked with equal juſtneſs, that though every man laments his own inſufficiency to his happineſs, and knows himſelf a neceſſitous and precarious being, inceſſantly ſoliciting the aſſiſtance of others, and feeling wants which his own art or ſtrength cannot ſupply; yet there is no man, who does not, by the ſuperaddition of unnatural cares, render himſelf ſtill more dependent; who does not create an artificial poverty, and ſuffer himſelf to feel pain for the want of that, of which, when it is gained, he can have no enjoyment.

It muſt, indeed, be allowed, that as we loſe part of our time becauſe it ſteals away ſilent and inviſible, and many an hour is paſſed before we recollect that it is paſſing; ſo unnatural deſires inſinuate themſelves unobſerved into the mind, and we do not perceive that they are gaining upon us, till the pain which they give us awakens us to notice. No man is ſufficiently vi-

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gilant to take account of every minute of his life, or to watch every motion of his heart. Much of our time likewiſe is ſacrificed to cuſtom; we trifle, becauſe we ſee others trifle: in the ſame manner we catch from example the contagion of deſire; we ſee all about us buſied in purſuit of imaginary good, and begin to buſtle in the ſame chaſe, leſt greater activity ſhould triumph over us.

It is true, that to man as a member of ſociety, many things become neceſſary, which, perhaps, in a ſtate of nature are ſuperfluous; and that many things, not abſolutely neceſſary, are yet ſo uſeful and convenient, that they cannot eaſily be ſpared. I will make yet a more ample and liberal conceſſion. In opulent ſtates and regular governments, the temptations to wealth and rank, and to the diſtinctions that follow them, are ſuch as no force of underſtanding finds it eaſy to reſiſt.

If, therefore, I ſaw the quiet of life diſturbed only by endeavours after wealth and honour; by ſolicitude, which the world, whether juſtly or not, conſidered as important; I ſhould ſcarcely have had courage to inculcate any precepts of moderation and forbearance. He that is engaged in a purſuit, in which all mankind profeſs to be his rivals, is ſupported by the authority of all mankind in the proſecution of his deſign, and will, therefore, ſcarcely ſtop to hear the lectures of a ſolitary philoſopher. Nor am I certain, that the accumulation of honeſt gain ought to be hindered, or the ambition of juſt honours always to be repreſſed. Whatever can enable the poſſeſſor to confer any benefit upon others, may be deſired upon virtuous principles; and we ought not too raſhly to accuſe any man of

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intending to confine the influence of his acquiſitions to himſelf.

But if we look round upon mankind, whom ſhall we find among thoſe that fortune permits to form their own manners, that is not tormenting himſelf with a wiſh for ſomething, of which all the pleaſure and all the benefit will ceaſe at the moment of attainment? One man is beggaring his poſterity to build a houſe, which when finiſhed he never will inhabit; another is levelling mountains to open a proſpect, which, when he has once enjoyed it, he can enjoy no more; another is painting ceilings, carving wainſcot, and filling his apartments with coſtly furniture, only that ſome neighbouring houſe may not be richer or finer than his own.

That ſplendour and elegance are not deſirable, I am not ſo abſtracted from life as to inculcate; but if we inquire cloſely into the reaſon for which they are eſteemed, we ſhall find them valued principally as evidences of wealth. Nothing, therefore, can ſhow greater depravity of underſtanding, than to delight in the ſhew when the reality is wanting; or voluntarily to become poor, that ſtrangers may for a time imagine us to be rich.

But there are yet minuter objects and more trifling anxieties. Men may be found, who are kept from ſleep by the want of a ſhell particularly variegated! who are waſting their lives, in ſtratagems to obtain a book in a language which they do not underſtand; who pine with envy at the flowers of another man's parterre; who hover like vultures round the owner of a foſſil, in hopes to plunder his cabinet at his death; and who would not much regret to ſee a ſtreet in flames, if a box of medals might be ſcattered in the tumult.

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He that imagines me to ſpeak of theſe ſages in terms exaggerated and hyperbolical, has converſed but little with the race of virtuoſos. A ſlight acquaintance with their ſtudies, and a few viſits to their aſſemblies, would inform him, that nothing is ſo worthleſs, but that prejudice and caprice can give it value; nor any thing of ſo little uſe, but that by indulging an idle competition or unreaſonable pride, a man may make it to himſelf one of the neceſſaries of life.

Deſires like theſe, I may ſurely, without incurring the cenſure of moroſeneſs, adviſe every man to repel when they invade his mind; or if he admits them, never to allow them any greater influence, than is neceſſary to give petty employments the power of pleaſing, and diverſify the day with ſlight amuſements.

An ardent wiſh, whatever be its object, will always be able to interrupt tranquillity. What we believe ourſelves to want, torments us not in proportion to its real value, but according to the eſtimation by which we have rated it in our own minds; in ſome diſeaſes, the patient has been obſerved to long for food, which ſcarce any extremity of hunger would in health have compelled him to ſwallow; but while his organs were thus depraved, the craving was irreſiſtible, nor could any reſt be obtained till it was appeaſed by compliance. Of the ſame nature are the irregular appetites of the mind; though they are often excited by trifles, they are equally diſquieting with real wants: the *Roman*, who wept at the death of his lamprey, felt the ſame degree of ſorrow that extorts tears on other occaſions.

Inordinate deſires, of whatever kind, ought to be repreſſed upon yet a higher conſideration; they muſt

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be conſidered as enemies not only to happineſs but to virtue. There are men, among thoſe commonly reckoned the learned and the wiſe, who ſpare no ſtratagems to remove a competitor at an auction, who will ſink the price of a rarity at the expenſe of truth, and whom it is not ſafe to truſt alone in a library or cabinet. Theſe are faults, which the fraternity ſeem to look upon as jocular miſchiefs, or to think excuſed by the violence of the temptation: but I ſhall always fear that he, who accuſtoms himſelf to fraud in little things, wants only opportunity to practiſe it in greater; "he that has "hardened himſelf by killing a ſheep," ſays *Pythagoras*, "will with leſs reluctance ſhed the blood of a man."

To prize every thing according to its *real* uſe ought to be the aim of a rational being. There are few things which can much conduce to happineſs, and, therefore, few things to be ardently deſired. He that looks upon the buſineſs and buſtle of the world, with the philoſophy with which *Socrates* ſurveyed the fair at *Athens*, will turn away at laſt with his exclamation, "How many "things are here which I do not want!"

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NUMB. 120. SATURDAY, *December* 29, 1753.

——— *Ultima ſemper*
Expectanda dies homini, dicique beatus
Ante obitum nemo ſupremaque funera debet. OVID.

But no frail man, however great or high,
Can be concluded bleſt before he die. ADDISON.

THE numerous miſeries of human life have extorted in all ages an univerſal complaint. The wiſeſt of men terminated all his experiments in ſearch of happineſs, by the mournful confeſſion, that "all is vanity;" and the ancient patriarchs lamented, that "the days of their pilgrimage were few and evil."

There is, indeed, no topick on which it is more ſuperfluous to accumulate authorities, nor any aſſertion of which our own eyes will more eaſily diſcover, or our ſenſations more frequently impreſs the truth, than, that miſery is the lot of man, that our preſent ſtate is a ſtate of danger and infelicity.

When we take the moſt diſtant proſpect of life, what does it preſent us but a chaos of unhappineſs, a confuſed and tumultuous ſcene of labour and conteſt, diſappointment and defeat? If we view paſt ages in the reflection of hiſtory, what do they offer to our meditation but crimes and calamities? One year is diſtinguiſhed by a famine, another by an earthquake; kingdoms are made deſolate, ſometimes by wars, and ſometimes by peſtilence; the peace of the world is

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interrupted at one time by the caprices of a tyrant, at another by the rage of a conqueror. The memory is ſtored only with viciſſitudes of evil; and the happineſs, ſuch as it is, of one part of mankind, is found to ariſe commonly from ſanguinary ſucceſs, from victories which confer upon them the power, not ſo much of improving life by any new enjoyment, as of inflicting miſery on others, and gratifying their own pride by comparative greatneſs.

But by him that examines life with a more cloſe attention, the happineſs of the world will be found ſtill leſs than it appears. In ſome intervals of publick proſperity, or to uſe terms more proper, in ſome intermiſſions of calamity, a general diffuſion of happineſs may ſeem to overſpread a people; all is triumph and exultation, jollity and plenty; there are no publick fears and dangers, and "no complainings in the ſtreets." But the condition of individuals is very little mended by this general calm: pain and malice and diſcontent ſtill continue their havock; the ſilent depredation goes inceſſantly forward; and the grave continues to be filled by the victims of ſorrow.

He that enters a gay aſſembly, beholds the cheerfulneſs diſplayed in every countenance, and finds all ſitting vacant and diſengaged, with no other attention than to give or to receive pleaſure; would naturally imagine, that he had reached at laſt the metropolis of felicity, the place ſacred to gladneſs of heart, from whence all fear and anxiety were irreverſibly excluded. Such, indeed, we may often find to be the opinion of thoſe, who from a lower ſtation look up to the pomp and gayety which they cannot reach; but who is there

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of thoſe who frequent theſe luxurious aſſemblies, that will not confeſs his own uneaſineſs, or cannot recount the vexations and diſtreſſes that prey upon the lives of his gay companions?

The world, in its beſt ſtate, is nothing more than a larger aſſembly of beings, combining to counterfeit happineſs which they do not feel, employing every art and contrivance to embelliſh life, and to hide their real condition from the eyes of one another.

The ſpecies of happineſs moſt obvious to the obſervation of others, is that which depends upon the goods of fortune; yet even this is often fictitious. There is in the world more poverty than is generally imagined; not only becauſe many whoſe poſſeſſions are large have deſires ſtill larger, and many meaſure their wants by the gratifications which others enjoy: but great numbers are preſſed by real neceſſities which it is their chief ambition to conceal, and are forced to purchaſe the appearance of competence and cheerfulneſs at the expenſe of many comforts and conveniencies of life.

Many, however, are confeſſedly rich, and many more are ſufficiently removed from all danger of real poverty: but it has been long ago remarked, that money cannot purchaſe quiet; the higheſt of mankind can promiſe themſelves no exemption from that diſcord or ſuſpicion, by which the ſweetneſs of domeſtick retirement is deſtroyed; and muſt always be even more expoſed, in the ſame degree as they are elevated above others, to the treachery of dependents, the calumny of defamers and the violence of opponents.

Affliction is inſeparable from our preſent ſtate; it adheres to all the inhabitants of this world, in different

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ferent proportions indeed, but with an allotment which ſeems very little regulated by our own conduct. It has been the boaſt of ſome ſwelling moraliſts, that every man's fortune was in his own power, that prudence ſupplied the place of all other divinities, and that happineſs is the unfailing conſequence of virtue. But, ſurely, the quiver of Omnipotence is ſtored with arrows, againſt which the ſhield of human virtue, however adamantine it has been boaſted, is held up in vain: we do not always ſuffer by our crimes; we are not always protected by our innocence.

A good man is by no means exempt from the danger of ſuffering by the crimes of others; even his goodneſs may raiſe him enemies of implacable malice and reſtleſs perſeverance: the good man has never been warranted by Heaven from the treachery of friends, the diſobedience of children, or the diſhoneſty of a wife; he may ſee his cares made uſeleſs by profuſion, his inſtructions defeated by perverſeneſs, and his kindneſs rejected by ingratitude; he may languiſh under the infamy of falſe accuſations, or periſh reproachfully by an unjuſt ſentence.

A good man is ſubject, like other mortals, to all the influences of natural evil; his harveſt is not ſpared by the tempeſt, nor his cattle by the murrain; his houſe flames like others in a conflagration; nor have his ſhips any peculiar power of reſiſting hurricanes: his mind, however elevated, inhabits a body ſubject to innumerable caſualties, of which he muſt always ſhare the dangers and the pains; he bears about him the ſeeds of diſeaſe, and may linger away a great part of his life under the tortures of the gout or ſtone; at one time groaning

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groaning with inſufferable anguiſh, at another diſſolved in liſtleſneſs and languor.

From this general and indiſcriminate diſtribution of miſery, the moraliſts have always derived one of their ſtrongeſt moral arguments for a future ſtate; for ſince the common events of the preſent life happen alike to the good and bad, it follows from the juſtice of the Supreme Being, that there muſt be another ſtate of exiſtence, in which a juſt retribution ſhall be made, and every man ſhall be happy and miſerable according to his works.

The miſeries of life may, perhaps, afford ſome proof of a future ſtate, compared as well with the mercy as the juſtice of God. It is ſcarcely to be imagined that Infinite Benevolence would create a being capable of enjoying ſo much more than is here to be enjoyed, and qualified by nature to prolong pain by remembrance, and anticipate it by terrour, if he was not deſigned for ſomething nobler and better than a ſtate, in which many of his faculties can ſerve only for his torment; in which he is to be importuned by deſires that never can be ſatisfied, to feel many evils which he had no power to avoid, and to fear many which he ſhall never feel: there will ſurely come a time, when every capacity of happineſs ſhall be filled, and none ſhall be wretched but by his own fault.

In the mean time, it is by affliction chiefly that the heart of man is purified, and that the thoughts are fixed upon a better ſtate. Proſperity, allayed and imperfect as it is, has power to intoxicate the imagination, to fix the mind upon the preſent ſcene, to produce confidence and elation, and to make him who enjoys affluence and honours

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honours forget the hand by which they were beſtowed. It is ſeldom that we are otherwiſe, than by affliction, awakened to a ſenſe of our own imbecility, or taught to know how little all our acquiſitions can conduce to ſafety or to quiet; and how juſtly we may aſcribe to the ſuperintendence of a higher Power, thoſe bleſſings which in the wantonneſs of ſucceſs we conſidered as the attainments of our policy or courage.

Nothing confers ſo much ability to reſiſt the temptations that perpetually ſurround us, as an habitual conſideration of the ſhortneſs of life, and the uncertainty of thoſe pleaſures that ſolicit our purſuit; and this conſideration can be inculcated only by affliction. "O Death! how bitter is the remembrance of thee, "to a man that lives at eaſe in his poſſeſſions!" If our preſent ſtate were one continued ſucceſſion of delights, or one uniform flow of calmneſs and tranquillity, we ſhould never willingly think upon its end; death would then ſurely ſurpriſe us as "a thief in the night;" and our taſk of duty would remain unfiniſhed, till "the "night came when no man can work."

While affliction thus prepares us for felicity, we may conſole ourſelves under its preſſures, by remembering, that they are no particular marks of divine diſpleaſure; ſince all the diſtreſſes of perſecution have been ſuffered by thoſe, "of whom the world was not worthy; and "the Redeemer of Mankind himſelf was a man of "ſorrows and acquainted with grief."

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NUMB. 126. SATURDAY, *January* 19, 1754.

——— *Steriles nec legit arenas*
Ut caneret paucis merſitque hoc pulvere verum. LUCAN.

Canſt thou believe the vaſt eternal Mind
Was e'er to Syrts and Lybian ſands confin'd?
That he would chuſe this waſte, this barren ground,
To teach the thin inhabitants around,
And leave his truth in wilds and deſerts drown'd?

THERE has always prevailed among that part of mankind that addict their minds to ſpeculation, a propenſity to talk much of the delights of retirement; and ſome of the moſt pleaſing compoſitions produced in every age contain deſcriptions of the peace and happineſs of a country life.

I know not whether thoſe who thus ambitiouſly repeat the praiſes of ſolitude, have always conſidered, how much they depreciate mankind by declaring, that whatever is excellent or deſirable is to be obtained by departing from them; that the aſſiſtance which we may derive from one another, is not equivalent to the evils which we have to fear; that the kindneſs of a few is overbalanced by the malice of many; and that the protection of ſociety is too dearly purchaſed by encountering its dangers and enduring its oppreſſions.

Theſe ſpecious repreſentations of ſolitary happineſs, however opprobrious to human nature, have ſo far ſpread their influence over the world, that almoſt every man delights his imagination with the hopes of obtaining

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ing ſome time an opportunity of retreat. Many, indeed, who enjoy retreat only in imagination, content themſelves with believing, that another year will tranſport them to rural tranquillity, and die while they talk of doing what, if they had lived longer, they would never have done. But many likewiſe there are, either of greater reſolution or more credulity, who in earneſt try the ſtate which they have been taught to think thus ſecure from cares and dangers; and retire to privacy, either that they may improve their happineſs, increaſe their knowledge, or exalt their virtue.

The greater part of the admirers of ſolitude, as of all other claſſes of mankind, have no higher or remoter view, than the preſent gratification of their paſſions. Of theſe, ſome, haughty and impetuous, fly from ſociety only becauſe they cannot bear to repay to others the regard which themſelves exact; and think no ſtate of life eligible, but that which places them out of the reach of cenſure or controul, and affords them opportunities of living in a perpetual compliance with their own inclinations, without the neceſſity of regulating their actions by any other man's convenience or opinion.

There are others, of minds more delicate and tender, eaſily offended by every deviation from rectitude, ſoon diſguſted by ignorance or impertinence, and always expecting from the converſation of mankind more elegance, purity, and truth, than the mingled maſs of life will eaſily afford. Such men are in haſte to retire from groſſneſs, falſehood, and brutality; and hope to find in private habitations at leaſt a negative felicity, an exemption from the ſhocks and perturbations with which publick ſcenes are continually diſtreſſing them.

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To neither of theſe votaries will ſolitude afford that content, which ſhe has been taught ſo laviſhly to promiſe. The man of arrogance will quickly diſcover, that by eſcaping from his opponents he has loſt his flatterers, that greatneſs is nothing where it is not ſeen, and power nothing where it cannot be felt: and he, whoſe faculties are employed in too cloſe an obſervation of failings and defects, will find his condition very little mended by transferring his attention from others to himſelf: he will probably ſoon come back in queſt of new objects, and be glad to keep his captiouſneſs employed on any character rather than his own.

Others are ſeduced into ſolitude merely by the authority of great names, and expect to find thoſe charms in tranquillity which have allured ſtateſmen and conquerors to the ſhades: theſe likewiſe are apt to wonder at their diſappointment, for want of conſidering, that thoſe whom they aſpire to imitate carried with them to their country ſeats minds full fraught with ſubjects of reflection, the conſciouſneſs of great merit, the memory of illuſtrious actions, the knowledge of important events, and the ſeeds of mighty deſigns to be ripened by future meditation. Solitude was to ſuch men a releaſe from fatigue, and an opportunity of uſefulneſs. But what can retirement confer upon him, who having done nothing, can receive no ſupport from his own importance, who having known nothing can find no entertainment in reviewing the paſt, and who intending nothing can form no hopes from proſpects of the future? He can, ſurely, take no wiſer courſe than that

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that of loſing himſelf again in the crowd, and filling the vacuities of his mind with the news of the day.

Others conſider ſolitude as the parent of philoſophy, and retire in expectation of greater intimacies with ſcience, as *Numa* repaired to the groves when he conferred with *Egeria*. Theſe men have not always reaſon to repent. Some ſtudies require a continued proſecution of the ſame train of thought, ſuch as is too often interrupted by the petty avocations of common life: ſometimes, likewiſe, it is neceſſary, that a multiplicity of objects be at once preſent to the mind; and every thing, therefore, muſt be kept at a diſtance, which may perplex the memory, or diſſipate the attention.

But though learning may be conferred by ſolitude, its application muſt be attained by general converſe. He has learned to no purpoſe, that is not able to teach; and he will always teach unſucceſsfully, who cannot recommend his ſentiments by his diction or addreſs.

Even the acquiſition of knowledge is often much facilitated by the advantages of ſociety: he that never compares his notions with thoſe of others, readily acquieſces in his firſt thoughts, and very ſeldom diſcovers the objections which may be raiſed againſt his opinions; he, therefore, often thinks himſelf in poſſeſſion of truth, when he is only fondling an errour long ſince exploded. He that has neither companions nor rivals in his ſtudies, will always applaud his own progreſs, and think highly of his performances, becauſe he knows not that others have equalled or excelled him. And I am

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am afraid it may be added, that the ſtudent who withdraws himſelf from the world, will ſoon feel that ardour extinguiſhed which praiſe or emulation had enkindled, and take the advantage of ſecrecy to ſleep, rather than to labour.

There remains yet another ſet of recluſes, whoſe intention entitles them to higher reſpect, and whoſe motives deſerve a more ſerious conſideration. Theſe retire from the world, not merely to baſk in eaſe or gratify curioſity; but that being diſengaged from common cares, they may employ more time in the duties of religion: that they may regulate their actions with ſtricter vigilance, and purify their thoughts by more frequent meditation.

To men thus elevated above the miſts of mortality, I am far from preſuming myſelf qualified to give directions. On him that appears "to paſs through "things temporary," with no other care than "not "to loſe finally the things eternal," I look with ſuch veneration as inclines me to approve his conduct in the whole, without a minute examination of its parts; yet I could never forbear to wiſh, that while vice is every day multiplying ſeducements, and ſtalking forth with more hardened effrontery, virtue would not withdraw the influence of her preſence, or forbear to aſſert her natural dignity by open and undaunted perſeverance in the right. Piety practiſed in ſolitude, like the flower that blooms in the deſert, may give its fragrance to the winds of Heaven, and delight thoſe unbodied ſpirits that ſurvey the works of God and the actions of men; but it beſtows no aſſiſtance upon

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earthly beings, and however free from taints of impurity, yet wants the ſacred ſplendour of beneficence.

Our Maker, who, though he gave us ſuch varieties of temper and ſuch difference of powers, yet deſigned us all for happineſs, undoubtedly intended, that we ſhould obtain that happineſs by different means. Some are unable to reſiſt the temptations of importunity, or the impetuoſity of their own paſſions incited by the force of preſent temptations: of theſe it is undoubtedly the duty to fly from enemies which they cannot conquer, and to cultivate, in the calm of ſolitude, that virtue which is too tender to endure the tempeſts of publick life. But there are others, whoſe paſſions grow more ſtrong and irregular in privacy; and who cannot maintain an uniform tenour of virtue, but by expoſing their manners to the publick eye, and aſſiſting the admonitions of conſcience with the fear of infamy: for ſuch it is dangerous to exclude all witneſſes of their conduct, till they have formed ſtrong habits of virtue, and weakened their paſſions by frequent victories. But there is a higher order of men ſo inſpired with ardour, and ſo fortified with reſolution, that the world paſſes before them without influence or regard: theſe ought to conſider themſelves as appointed the guardians of mankind: they are placed in an evil world, to exhibit publick examples of good life: and may be ſaid, when they withdraw to ſolitude, to deſert the ſtation which Providence aſſigned them.

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NUMB. 128. SATURDAY, *January* 26, 1754.

Ille sinistrorsum, hic dextrorsum abit; unus utrique
Error, sed variis illudit partibus. HOR.

When in a wood we leave the certain way,
One error fools us, though we various stray,
Some to the left, and some to t'other side. FRANCIS.

IT is common among all the claſſes of mankind, to charge each other with trifling away life: every man looks on the occupation or amuſement of his neighbour, as ſomething below the dignity of our nature, and unworthy of the attention of a rational being.

A man who conſiders the paucity of the wants of nature, and who, being acquainted with the various means by which all manual occupations are now facilitated, obſerves what numbers are ſupported by the labour of a few, would, indeed, be inclined to wonder, how the multitudes who are exempted from the neceſſity of working either for themſelves or others, find buſineſs to fill up the vacuities of life. The greater part of mankind neither card the fleece, dig the mine, fell the wood, nor gather in the harveſt; they neither tend herds nor build houſes; in what then are they employed?

This is certainly a queſtion, which a diſtant proſpect of the world will not enable us to anſwer. We find all ranks and ages mingled together in a tumultuous confuſion, with haſte in their motions, and eagerneſs in their looks; but what they have to purſue or avoid, a more minute obſervation muſt inform them.

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When we analyſe the crowd into individuals, it ſoon appears that the paſſions and imaginations of men will not eaſily ſuffer them to be idle: we ſee things coveted merely becauſe they are rare, and purſued becauſe they are fugitive; we ſee men conſpire to fix an arbitrary value on that which is worthleſs in itſelf, and then contend for the poſſeſſion. One is a collector of foſſils, of which he knows no other uſe than to ſhow them; and when he has ſtocked his own repoſitory, grieves that the ſtones which he has left behind him ſhould be picked up by another. The floriſt nurſes a tulip, and repines that his rival's beds enjoy the ſame ſhowers and ſunſhine with his own. This man is hurrying to a concert, only leſt others ſhould have heard the new muſician before him; another burſts from his company to the play, becauſe he fancies himſelf the patron of an actreſs; ſome ſpend the morning in conſultations with their tailor, and ſome in directions to their cook: ſome are forming parties for cards, and ſome laying wagers at a horſe-race.

It cannot, I think, be denied, that ſome of theſe lives are paſſed in trifles, in occupations by which the buſy neither benefit themſelves nor others, and by which no man could be long engaged, who ſeriouſly conſidered what he was doing, or had knowledge enough to compare what he is with what he might be made. However, as people who have the ſame inclination generally flock together, every trifler is kept in countenance by the ſight of others as unprofitably active as himſelf; by kindling the heat of competition, he in time thinks himſelf important, and by having his mind intenſely

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intenſely engaged, he is ſecured from wearineſs of himſelf.

Some degree of ſelf-approbation is always the reward of diligence; and I cannot, therefore, but conſider the laborious cultivation of petty pleaſures, as a more happy and more virtuous diſpoſition, than that univerſal contempt and haughty negligence, which is ſometimes aſſociated with powerful faculties, but is often aſſumed by indolence when it diſowns its name, and aſpires to the appellation of greatneſs of mind.

It has been long obſerved, that drollery and ridicule is the moſt eaſy kind of wit: let it be added, that contempt and arrogance is the eaſieſt philoſophy. To find ſome objection to every thing, and to diſſolve in perpetual lazineſs under pretence that occaſions are wanting to call forth activity, to laugh at thoſe who are ridiculouſly buſy without ſetting an example of more rational induſtry, is no leſs in the power of the meaneſt than of the higheſt intellects.

Our preſent ſtate has placed us at once in ſuch different relations, that every human employment, which is not a viſible and immediate act of goodneſs, will be in ſome reſpect or other ſubject to contempt; but it is true, likewiſe, that almoſt every act, which is not directly vicious, is in ſome reſpect beneficial and laudable. "I often," ſays *Bruyere*, "obſerve from my window, "two beings of erect form and amiable countenance, "endowed with the powers of reaſon, able to clothe "their thoughts in language, and convey their notions "to each other. They riſe early in the morning, "and are every day employed till ſunſet in rubbing

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" two ſmooth ſtones together, or, in other terms, in " poliſhing marble."

" If lions could paint," ſays the fable, " in the " room of thoſe pictures which exhibit men vanquiſh- " ing lions, we ſhould ſee lions feeding upon men. " If the ſtonecutter could have written like *Bruyere*, " what would he have replied?

" I look up," ſays he, " every day from my ſhop, " upon a man whom the idlers, who ſtand ſtill to gaze " upon my work, often celebrate as a wit and a phi- " loſopher. I often perceive his face clouded with " care, and am told that his taper is ſometimes burn- " ing at midnight. The ſight of a man who works ſo " much harder than myſelf, excited my curioſity. I " heard no ſound of tools in his apartment, and, there- " fore, could not imagine what he was doing; but was " told at laſt, that he was writing deſcriptions of man- " kind, who when he had deſcribed them would live " juſt as they had lived before; that he ſat up whole " nights to change a ſentence, becauſe the ſound of a " letter was too often repeated; that he was often diſ- " quieted with doubts, about the propriety of a word " which every body underſtood; that he would heſi- " tate between two expreſſions equally proper, till he " could not fix his choice but by conſulting his friends; " that he will run from one end of Paris to the other, " for an opportunity of reading a period to a nice ear; " that if a ſingle line is heard with coldneſs and inat- " tention, he returns home dejected and diſconſolate; " and that by all this care and labour, he hopes only " to make a little book, which at laſt will teach no

" uſeful

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" uſeful art, and which none who has it not will per-
" ceive himſelf to want. I have often wondered for
" what end ſuch a being as this was ſent into the
" world; and ſhould be glad to ſee thoſe who live
" thus fooliſhly, ſeized by an order of the government,
" and obliged to labour at ſome uſeful occupation."

Thus, by a partial and imperfect repreſentation, may every thing be made equally ridiculous. He that gazed with contempt on human beings rubbing ſtones together, might have prolonged the ſame amuſement by walking through the city, and ſeeing others with looks of importance heaping one brick upon another; or by rambling into the country, where he might obſerve other creatures of the ſame kind driving in a piece of ſharp iron into the clay, or in the language of men leſs enlightened, ploughing the field.

As it is thus eaſy by a detail of minute circumſtances to make every thing little, ſo it is not difficult by an aggregation of effects to make every thing great. The poliſher of marble may be forming ornaments for the palaces of virtue, and the ſchools of ſcience; or providing tables on which the actions of heroes and the diſcoveries of ſages ſhall be recorded, for the incitement and inſtruction of future generations. The maſon is exerciſing one of the principal arts by which reaſoning beings are diſtinguiſhed from the brute, the art to which life owes much of its ſafety and all its convenience, by which we are ſecured from the inclemency of the ſeaſons, and fortified againſt the ravages of hoſtility; and the ploughman is changing the face of nature, diffuſing plenty and happineſs over kingdoms, and compelling the earth to give food to her inhabitants.

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Greatneſs and littleneſs are terms merely comparative; and we err in our eſtimation of things, becauſe we meaſure them by ſome wrong ſtandard. The trifler propoſes to himſelf only to equal or excel ſome other trifler, and is happy or miſerable as he ſucceeds or miſcarries: the man of ſedentary deſire and unactive ambition fits comparing his power with his wiſhes; and makes his inability to perform things impoſſible, an excuſe to himſelf for performing nothing. Man can only form a juſt eſtimate of his own actions, by making his power the teſt of his performance, by comparing what he does with what he can do. Whoever ſteadily perſeveres in the exertion of all his faculties, does what is great with reſpect to himſelf; and what will not be deſpiſed by Him, who has given to all created beings their different abilities: he faithfully performs the taſk of life, within whatever limits his labours may be confined, or how ſoon ſoever they may be forgotten

We can conceive ſo much more than we can accompliſh, that whoever tries his own actions by his imagination, may appear deſpicable in his own eyes. He that deſpiſes for its littleneſs any thing really uſeful, has no pretenſions to applaud the grandeur of his conceptions; ſince nothing but narrowneſs of mind hinders him from ſeeing, that by purſuing the ſame principles every thing limited will appear contemptible.

He that neglects the care of his family, while his benevolence expands itſelf in ſcheming the happineſs of imaginary kingdoms, might with equal reaſon ſit on a throne dreaming of univerſal empire, and of the diffuſion of bleſſings over all the globe: yet even this globe

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globe is little, compared with the ſyſtem of matter within our view! and that ſyſtem barely ſomething more than nonentity, compared with the boundleſs regions of ſpace, to which neither eye nor imagination can extend.

From conceptions, therefore, of what we might have been, and from wiſhes to be what we are not, conceptions that we know to be fooliſh, and wiſhes which we feel to be vain, we muſt neceſſarily deſcend to the conſideration of what we are. We have powers very ſcanty in their utmoſt extent, but which in different men are differently proportioned. Suitably to theſe powers we have duties preſcribed, which we muſt neither decline for the ſake of delighting ourſelves with eaſier amuſements, nor overlook in idle contemplation of greater excellence or more extenſive comprehenſion.

In order to the right conduct of our lives, we muſt remember, that we are not born to pleaſe ourſelves. He that ſtudies ſimply his own ſatisfaction, will always find the proper buſineſs of his ſtation too hard or too eaſy for him. But if we bear continually in mind, our relation to The Father of Being, by whom we are placed in the world, and who has allotted us the part which we are to bear in the general ſyſtem of life, we ſhall be eaſily perſuaded to reſign our own inclinations to Unerring Wiſdom, and do the work decreed for us with cheerfulneſs and diligence.

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NUMB. 131. TUESDAY, *February* 5, 1754.

——— *Miſce*
Ergo aliquid noſtris de moribus. JUVENAL.

And mingle ſomething of our times to pleaſe.
DRYDEN Jun.

FONTENELLE, in his panegyrick on Sir *Iſaac Newton*, cloſes a long enumeration of that great philoſopher's virtues and attainments, with an obſervation, that "he was not diſtinguiſhed from other men, by "any ſingularity either natural or affected."

It is an eminent inſtance of *Newton*'s ſuperiority to the reſt of mankind, that he was able to ſeparate knowledge from thoſe weakneſſes by which knowledge is generally diſgraced; that he was able to excel in ſcience and wiſdom, without purchaſing them by the neglect of little things; and that he ſtood alone, merely becauſe he had left the reſt of mankind behind him, not becauſe he deviated from the beaten track.

Whoever, after the example of *Plutarch*, ſhould compare the lives of illuſtrious men, might ſet this part of *Newton*'s character to view with great advantage, by oppoſing it to that of *Bacon*, perhaps the only man of later ages, who has any pretenſions to diſpute with him the palm of genius or ſcience.

Bacon, after he had added to a long and careful contemplation of almoſt every other object of knowledge a curious

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a curious inſpection into common life, and after having ſurveyed nature as a philoſopher, had examined "men's buſineſs and boſoms" as a ſtateſman; yet failed ſo much in the conduct of domeſtick affairs, that, in the moſt lucrative poſt to which a great and wealthy kingdom could advance him, he felt all the miſeries of diſtreſsful poverty, and committed all the crimes to which poverty incites. Such were at once his negligence and rapacity, that, as it is ſaid, he would gain by unworthy practices that money, which, when ſo acquired, his ſervants might ſteal from one end of the table, while he ſat ſtudious and abſtracted at the other.

As ſcarcely any man has reached the excellence, very few have ſunk to the weakneſs of *Bacon:* but almoſt all the ſtudious tribe, as they obtain any participation of his knowledge, feel likewiſe ſome contagion of his defects; and obſtruct the veneration which learning would procure, by follies greater or leſs, to which only learning could betray them.

It has been formerly remarked by *The Guardian*, that the world puniſhes with too great ſeverity the errours of thoſe, who imagine that the ignorance of little things may be compenſated by the knowledge of great; for ſo it is, that as more can detect petty failings than can diſtinguiſh or eſteem great qualifications, and as mankind is in general more eaſily diſpoſed to cenſure than to admiration, contempt is often incurred by ſlight miſtakes, which real virtue or uſefulneſs cannot counterbalance.

Yet ſuch miſtakes and inadvertencies, it is not eaſy for a man deeply immerſed in ſtudy to avoid; no man can become qualified for the common intercourſes of life,

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life, by private meditation; the manners of the world are not a regular ſyſtem, planned by philoſophers upon ſettled principles, in which every cauſe has a congruous effect, and one part has a juſt reference to another. Of the faſhions prevalent in every country, a few have ariſen, perhaps, from particular temperatures of the climate; a few more from the conſtitution of the government; but the greater part have grown up by chance; been ſtarted by caprice, been contrived by affectation, or borrowed without any juſt motives of choice from other countries.

Of all theſe, the ſavage that hunts his prey upon the mountains, and the ſage that ſpeculates in his cloſet, muſt neceſſarily live in equal ignorance; yet by the obſervation of theſe trifles it is, that the ranks of mankind are kept in order, that the addreſs of one to another is regulated, and the general buſineſs of the world carried on with facility and method.

Theſe things, therefore, though ſmall in themſelves, become great by their frequency; and he very much miſtakes his own intereſt, who, to the unavoidable unſkilfulneſs of abſtraction and retirement, adds a voluntary neglect of common forms, and increaſes the diſadvantages of a ſtudious courſe of life by an arrogant contempt of thoſe practices, by which others endeavour to gain favour and multiply friendſhips.

A real and interiour diſdain of faſhion and ceremony is, indeed, not very often to be found: much the greater part of thoſe who pretend to laugh at foppery and formality, ſecretly wiſh to have poſſeſſed thoſe qualifications which they pretend to deſpiſe; and becauſe they find it difficult to waſh away the tincture which they have

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have ſo deeply imbibed, endeavour to harden themſelves in a ſullen approbation of their own colour. Neutrality is a ſtate, into which the buſy paſſions of man cannot eaſily ſubſide; and he who is in danger of the pangs of envy, is generally forced to recreate his imagination with an effort of comfort.

Some, however, may be found, who, ſupported by the conſciouſneſs of great abilities, and elevated by a long courſe of reputation and applauſe, voluntarily conſign themſelves to ſingularity, affect to croſs the roads of life becauſe they know that they ſhall not be joſtled, and indulge a boundleſs gratification of will becauſe they perceive that they ſhall be quietly obeyed. Men of this kind are generally known by the name of *Humouriſts*, an appellation by which he that has obtained it, and can be contented to keep it, is ſet free at once from the ſhackles of faſhion: and can go in or out, ſit or ſtand, be talkative or ſilent, gloomy or merry, advance abſurdities or oppoſe demonſtration, without any other reprehenſion from mankind, than that it is his way, that he is an odd fellow, and muſt be let alone.

This ſeems to many an eaſy paſſport through the various factions of mankind; and thoſe on whom it is beſtowed, appear too frequently to conſider the patience with which their caprices are ſuffered as an undoubted evidence of their own importance, of a genius to which ſubmiſſion is univerſally paid, and whoſe irregularities are only conſidered as conſequences of its vigour. Theſe peculiarities, however, are always found to ſpot a character, though they may not totally obſcure it; and he who expects from mankind, that they ſhould give up eſtabliſhed cuſtoms in compliance with his ſingle will,

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and exacts that deference which he does not pay, may be endured, but can never be approved.

Singularity is, I think, in its own nature univerſally and invariably diſpleaſing. In whatever reſpect a man differs from others, he muſt be conſidered by them as either worſe or better: by being better, it is well known that a man gains admiration oftener than love, ſince all approbation of his practice muſt neceſſarily condemn him that gives it; and though a man often pleaſes by inferiority, there are few who deſire to give ſuch pleaſure. Yet the truth is, that ſingularity is almoſt always regarded as a brand of ſlight reproach; and where it is aſſociated with acknowledged merit, ſerves as an abatement or an allay of excellence, by which weak eyes are reconciled to its luſtre, and by which, though kindneſs is not gained, at leaſt envy is averted.

But let no man be in haſte to conclude his own merit ſo great or conſpicuous, as to require or juſtify ſingularity: it is as hazardous for a moderate underſtanding to uſurp the prerogatives of genius, as for a common form to play over the airs of uncontеſted beauty. The pride of men will not patiently endure to ſee one, whoſe underſtanding or attainments are but level with their own, break the rules by which they have conſented to be bound, or forſake the direction which they ſubmiſſively follow. All violation of eſtabliſhed practice implies in its own nature a rejection of the common opinion, a defiance of common cenſure, and an appeal from general laws to private judgment: he, therefore, who differs from others without apparent advantage ought not to be angry if his arrogance is puniſhed with ridicule; if thoſe, whoſe example he

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ſupercilioufly overlooks, point him out to deriſion, and hoot him back again into the common road.

The pride of ſingularity is often exerted in little things, where right and wrong are indeterminable, and where, therefore, vanity is without excuſe. But there are occaſions on which it is noble to dare to ſtand alone. To be pious among infidels, to be diſintereſted in a time of general venality, to lead a life of virtue and reaſon in the midſt of ſenſualiſts, is a proof of a mind intent on nobler things than the praiſe or blame of men, of a ſoul fixed in the contemplation of the higheſt good, and ſuperiour to the tyranny of cuſtom and example.

In moral and religious queſtions only, a wiſe man will hold no conſultations with faſhion, becauſe theſe duties are conſtant and immutable, and depend not on the notions of men, but the commands of Heaven: yet even of theſe, the external mode is to be in ſome meaſure regulated by the prevailing taſte of the age in which we live; for he is certainly no friend to virtue, who neglects to give it any lawful attraction, or ſuffers it to deceive the eye or alienate the affections for want of innocent compliance with faſhionable decorations.

It is yet remembered of the learned and pious *Nelſon*, that he was remarkably elegant in his manners, and ſplendid in his dreſs. He knew, that the eminence of his character drew many eyes upon him; and he was careful not to drive the young or the gay away from religion, by repreſenting it as an enemy to any diſtinction or enjoyment in which human nature may innocently delight.

In this cenſure of ſingularity, I have, therefore, no intention to ſubject reaſon or conſcience to cuſtom or example.

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example. To comply with the notions and practices of mankind, is in ſome degree the duty of a ſocial being; becauſe by compliance only he can pleaſe, and by pleaſing only he can become uſeful: but as the end is not to be loſt for the ſake of the means, we are not to give up virtue to complaiſance; for the end of complaiſance is only to gain the kindneſs of our fellow beings, whoſe kindneſs is deſirable only as inſtrumental to happineſs, and happineſs muſt be always loſt by departure from virtue.

NUMB. 137. TUESDAY, *February* 26, 1754.

Τι δ' ἔρεξα. PYTH.

What have I been doing?

As man is a being very ſparingly furniſhed with the power of preſcience, he can provide for the future only by conſidering the paſt; and as futurity is all in which he has any real intereſt, he ought very diligently to uſe the only means by which he can be enabled to enjoy it, and frequently to revolve the experiments which he has hitherto made upon life, that he may gain wiſdom from his miſtakes, and caution from his miſcarriages.

Though I do not ſo exactly conform to the precepts of *Pythagoras*, as to practiſe every night this ſolemn recollection, yet I am not ſo loſt in diſſipation as wholly to omit it; nor can I forbear ſometimes to inquire of myſelf, in what employment my life has paſſed away.

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Much of my time has ſunk into nothing, and left no trace by which it can be diſtinguiſhed; and of this I now only know, that it was once in my power, and might once have been improved.

Of other parts of life, memory can give ſome account; at ſome hours I have been gay, and at others ſerious; I have ſometimes mingled in converſation, and ſometimes meditated in ſolitude; one day has been ſpent in conſulting the ancient ſages, and another in writing *Adventurers*.

At the concluſion of any undertaking, it is uſual to compute the loſs and profit. As I ſhall ſoon ceaſe to write *Adventurers*, I could not forbear lately to conſider what has been the conſequence of my labours; and whether I am to reckon the hours laid out in theſe compoſitions, as applied to a good and laudable purpoſe, or ſuffered to fume away in uſeleſs evaporations.

That I have intended well, I have the atteſtation of my own heart: but good intentions may be fruſtrated when they are executed without ſuitable ſkill, or directed to an end unattainable in itſelf.

Some there are, who leave writers very little room for ſelf-congratulation; ſome who affirm, that books have no influence upon the publick, that no age was ever made better by its authors, and that to call upon mankind to correct their manners, is like *Xerxes*, to ſcourge the wind, or ſhackle the torrent.

This opinion they pretend to ſupport by unfailing experience. The world is full of fraud and corruption, rapine or malignity; intereſt is the ruling motive of mankind, and every one is endeavouring to increaſe his own ſtores of happineſs by perpetual accumulation,

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without reflecting upon the numbers whom his ſuperfluity condemns to want: in this ſtate of things a book of morality is publiſhed, in which charity and benevolence are ſtrongly enforced; and it is proved beyond oppoſition, that men are happy in proportion as they are virtuous, and rich as they are liberal. The book is applauded, and the author is preferred; he imagines his applauſe deſerved, and receives leſs pleaſure from the acquiſition of reward than the conſciouſneſs of merit. Let us look again upon mankind: intereſt is ſtill the ruling motive, and the world is yet full of fraud and corruption, malevolence and rapine.

The difficulty of confuting this aſſertion, ariſes merely from its generality and comprehenſion: to overthrow it by a detail of diſtinct facts, requires a wider ſurvey of the world than human eyes can take; the progreſs of reformation is gradual and ſilent, as the extenſion of evening ſhadows; we know that they were ſhort at noon, and are long at ſunſet, but our ſenſes were not able to diſcern their increaſe: we know of every civil nation, that it was once ſavage, and how was it reclaimed but by a precept and admonition?

Mankind are univerſally corrupt, but corrupt in different degrees; as they are univerſally ignorant, yet with greater or leſs irradiations of knowledge. How has knowledge or virtue been increaſed and preſerved in one place beyond another; but by diligent inculcation and rational inforcement?

Books of morality are daily written, yet its influence is ſtill little in the world; ſo the ground is annually ploughed, and yet multitudes are in want of bread. But, ſurely, neither the labours of the moraliſt nor of the

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the husbandman are vain: let them for a while neglect their tasks, and their usefulness will be known; the wickedness that is now frequent would become universal, the bread that is now scarce would wholly fail.

The power, indeed, of every individual is small, and the consequence of his endeavours imperceptible in a general prospect of the world. Providence has given no man ability to do much, that something might be left for every man to do. The business of life is carried on by a general cooperation; in which the part of any single man can be no more distinguished, than the effect of a particular drop when the meadows are floated by a summer shower: yet every drop increases the inundation, and every hand adds to the happiness or misery of mankind.

That a writer, however zealous or eloquent, seldom works a visible effect upon cities or nations, will readily be granted. The book which is read most, is read by few, compared with those that read it not; and of those few, the greater part peruse it with dispositions that very little favour their own improvement.

It is difficult to enumerate the several motives which procure to books the honour of perusal: spite, vanity, and curiosity, hope and fear, love and hatred, every passion which incites to any other action, serves at one time or other to stimulate a reader.

Some are fond to take a celebrated volume into their hands, because they hope to distinguish their penetration, by finding faults which have escaped the publick; others eagerly buy it in the first bloom of reputation, that they may join the chorus of praise, and

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not lag, as *Falſtaff* terms it, in "the rearward of the "fashion."

Some read for ſtyle, and ſome for argument: one has little care about the ſentiment, he obſerves only how it is expreſſed; another regards not the concluſion, but is diligent to mark how it is inferred: they read for other purpoſes than the attainment of practical knowledge; and are no more likely to grow wiſe by an examination of a treatiſe of moral prudence, than an architect to inflame his devotion by conſidering attentively the proportions of a temple.

Some read that they may embelliſh their converſation, or ſhine in diſpute; ſome that they may not be detected in ignorance, or want the reputation of literary accompliſhments: but the moſt general and prevalent reaſon of ſtudy is the impoſſibility of finding another amuſement equally cheap or conſtant, equally independent on the hour or the weather. He that wants money to follow the chaſe of pleaſure through her yearly circuit, and is left at home when the gay world rolls to *Bath* or *Tunbridge*; he whoſe gout compels him to hear from his chamber the rattle of chariots tranſporting happier beings to plays and aſſemblies, will be forced to ſeek in books a refuge from himſelf.

The author is not wholly uſeleſs, who provides innocent amuſements for minds like theſe. There are, in the preſent ſtate of things, ſo many more inſtigations to evil, than incitements to good, that he who keeps men in a neutral ſtate, may be juſtly conſidered as a benefactor to life.

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But, perhaps, it ſeldom happens, that ſtudy terminates in mere paſtime. Books have always a ſecret influence on the underſtanding; we cannot at pleaſure obliterate ideas: he that reads books of ſcience, though without any fixed deſire of improvement, will grow more knowing; he that entertains himſelf with moral or religious treatiſes, will imperceptibly advance in goodneſs; the ideas which are often offered to the mind, will at laſt find a lucky moment when it is diſpoſed to receive them.

It is, therefore, urged without reaſon, as a diſcouragement to writers, that there are already books ſufficient in the world; that all the topicks of perſuaſion have been diſcuſſed, and every important queſtion clearly ſtated and juſtly decided; and that, therefore, there is no room to hope, that pigmies ſhould conquer where heroes have been defeated, or that the petty copiers of the preſent time ſhould advance the great work of reformation, which their predeceſſors were forced to leave unfiniſhed.

Whatever be the preſent extent of human knowledge, it is not only finite, and therefore in its own nature capable of increaſe; but ſo narrow, that almoſt every underſtanding may, by a diligent application of its powers, hope to enlarge it. It is, however, not neceſſary, that a man ſhould forbear to write, till he has diſcovered ſome truth unknown before; he may be ſufficiently uſeful, by only diverſifying the ſurface of knowledge, and luring the mind by a new appearance to a ſecond view of thoſe beauties which it had paſſed over inattentively before. Every writer may find intellects correſpondent to his own, to whom his

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expreſſions are familiar and his thoughts congenial; and, perhaps, truth is often more ſucceſsfully propagated by men of moderate abilities, who, adopting the opinions of others, have no care but to explain them clearly, than by ſubtle ſpeculatiſts and curious ſearchers, who exact from their readers powers equal to their own, and if their fabricks of ſcience be ſtrong, take no care to render them acceſſible.

For my part, I do not regret the hours which I have laid out in theſe little compoſitions. That the world has grown apparently better, ſince the publication of the *Adventurer*, I have not obſerved; but am willing to think, that many have been affected by ſingle ſentiments, of which it is their buſineſs to renew the impreſſion; that many have caught hints of truth, which it is now their duty to purſue; and that thoſe who have received no improvement, have wanted not opportunity but intention to improve.

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NUMB. 138. SATURDAY, *March* 2, 1754.

Quid purè tranquillet? honos, an dulce lucellum,
An ſecretum iter, et fallentis ſemita vitæ? HOR.

Whether the tranquil mind and pure,
Honours or wealth our bliſs inſure;
Or down through life unknown to ſtray,
Where lonely leads the ſilent way. FRANCIS.

HAVING conſidered the importance of authors to the welfare of the publick, I am led by a natural train of thought, to reflect on their condition with regard to themſelves; and to inquire what degree of happineſs or vexation is annexed to the difficult and laborious employment of providing inſtruction or entertainment for mankind.

In eſtimating the pain or pleaſure of any particular ſtate, every man, indeed, draws his deciſions from his own breaſt, and cannot with certainty determine, whether other minds are affected by the ſame cauſes in the ſame manner. Yet by this criterion we muſt be content to judge, becauſe no other can be obtained; and, indeed, we have no reaſon to think it very fallacious, for excepting here and there an anomalous mind, which either does not feel like others, or diſſembles its ſenſibility, we find men unanimouſly concur in attributing happineſs or miſery to particular conditions, as they agree in acknowledging the cold of winter and the heat of autumn.

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If we apply to authors themſelves for an account of their ſtate, it will appear very little to deſerve envy; for they have in all ages been addicted to complaint. The neglect of learning, the ingratitude of the preſent age, and the abſurd preference by which ignorance and dulneſs often obtain favour and rewards, have been from age to age topicks of invective; and few have left their names to poſterity, without ſome appeal to future candour from the perverſeneſs and malice of their own times.

I have, nevertheleſs, been often inclined to doubt, whether authors, however querulous, are in reality more miſerable than their fellow mortals. The preſent life is to all a ſtate of infelicity; every man, like an author, believes himſelf to merit more than he obtains, and ſolaces the preſent with the proſpect of the future; others, indeed, ſuffer thoſe diſappointments in ſilence, of which the writer complains, to ſhow how well he has learnt the art of lamentation.

There is at leaſt one gleam of felicity, of which few writers have miſſed the enjoyment: he whoſe hopes have ſo far overpowered his fears, as that he has reſolved to ſtand forth a candidate for fame, ſeldom fails to amuſe himſelf, before his appearance, with pleaſing ſcenes of affluence or honour; while his fortune is yet under the regulation of fancy, he eaſily models it to his wiſh, ſuffers no thoughts of criticks or rivals to intrude upon his mind, but counts over the bounties of patronage, or liſtens to the voice of praiſe.

Some there are, that talk very luxurioufly of the ſecond period of an author's happineſs, and tell of the tumultuous raptures of invention, when the mind riots in

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in imagery, and the choice ſtands ſuſpended between different ſentiments.

Theſe pleaſures, I believe, may ſometimes be indulged to thoſe, who come to a ſubject of diſquiſition with minds full of ideas, and with fancies ſo vigorous, as eaſily to excite, ſelect, and arrange them. To write is, indeed, no unpleaſing employment, when one ſentiment readily produces another, and both ideas and expreſſions preſent themſelves at the firſt ſummons: but ſuch happineſs, the greateſt genius does not always obtain; and common writers know it only to ſuch a degree, as to credit its poſſibility. Compoſition is, for the moſt part, an effort of ſlow diligence and ſteady perſeverance, to which the mind is dragged by neceſſity or reſolution, and from which the attention is every moment ſtarting to more delightful amuſements.

It frequently happens, that a deſign which, when conſidered at a diſtance, gave flattering hopes of facility, mocks us in the execution with unexpected difficulties; the mind which, while it conſidered it in the groſs, imagined itſelf amply furniſhed with materials, finds ſometimes an unexpected barrenneſs and vacuity, and wonders whither all thoſe ideas are vaniſhed, which a little before ſeemed ſtruggling for emiſſion.

Sometimes many thoughts preſent themſelves; but ſo confuſed and unconnected, that they are not without difficulty reduced to method, or concatenated in a regular and dependent ſeries: the mind falls at once into a labyrinth, of which neither the beginning nor end can be diſcovered, and toils and ſtruggles without progreſs or extrication.

It is aſſerted by *Horace*, that "if matter be once "got

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" got together, words will be found with very little " difficulty ;" a poſition which, though ſufficiently plauſible to be inſerted in poetical precepts, is by no means ſtrictly and philoſophically true. If words were naturally and neceſſarily conſequential to ſentiments, it would always follow, that he who has moſt knowledge muſt have moſt eloquence, and that every man would clearly expreſs what he fully underſtood : yet we find, that to think, and diſcourſe, are often the qualities of different perſons : and many books might ſurely be produced, where juſt and noble ſentiments are degraded and obſcured by unſuitable diction.

Words, therefore, as well as things, claim the care of an author. Indeed of many authors, and thoſe not uſeleſs or contemptible, words are almoſt the only care : many make it their ſtudy, not ſo much to ſtrike out new ſentiments, as to recommend thoſe which are already known to more favourable notice by fairer decorations : but every man, whether he copies or invents, whether he delivers his own thoughts or thoſe of another, has often found himſelf deficient in the power of expreſſion, big with ideas which he could not utter, obliged to ranſack his memory for terms adequate to his conceptions, and at laſt unable to impreſs upon his reader the image exiſting in his own mind.

It is one of the common diſtreſſes of a writer, to be within a word of a happy period, to want only a ſingle epithet to give amplification its full force, to require only a correſpondent term in order to finiſh a paragraph with elegance, and make one of its members anſwer to the other : but theſe deficiencies cannot always be ſupplied ; and after a long ſtudy and vexation, the paſſage

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is turned anew, and the web unwoven that was ſo nearly finiſhed.

But when thoughts and words are collected and adjuſted, and the whole compoſition at laſt concluded, it ſeldom gratifies the author, when he comes coolly and deliberately to review it, with the hopes which had been excited in the fury of the performance: novelty always captivates the mind; as our thoughts riſe freſh upon us, we readily believe them juſt and original, which, when the pleaſure of production is over, we find to be mean and common, or borrowed from the works of others, and ſupplied by memory rather than invention.

But though it ſhould happen that the writer finds no ſuch faults in his performance, he is ſtill to remember, that he looks upon it with partial eyes: and when he conſiders, how much men who could judge of others with great exactneſs, have often failed of judging of themſelves, he will be afraid of deciding too haſtily in his own favour, or of allowing himſelf to contemplate with too much complacence, treaſure that has not yet been brought to the teſt, nor paſſed the only trial that can ſtamp its value.

From the publick, and only from the publick, is he to await a confirmation of his claim, and a final juſtification of ſelf-eſteem; but the publick is not eaſily perſuaded to favour an author. If mankind were left to judge for themſelves, it is reaſonable to imagine, that of ſuch writings, at leaſt, as deſcribe the movements of the human paſſions, and of which every man carries the archetype within him, a juſt opinion would be formed; but whoever has remarked the fate of books, muſt

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muſt have found it governed by other cauſes, than general conſent ariſing from general conviction. If a new performance happens not to fall into the hands of ſome who have courage to tell, and authority to propagate their opinion, it often remains long in obſcurity, and periſhes unknown and unexamined. A few, a very few, commonly conſtitute the taſte of the time; the judgment which they have once pronounced, ſome are too lazy to diſcuſs, and ſome too timorous to contradict: it may however be, I think, obſerved, that their power is greater to depreſs than exalt, as mankind are more credulous of cenſure than of praiſe.

This perverſion of the publick judgment is not to be raſhly numbered amongſt the miſeries of an author; ſince it commonly ſerves, after miſcarriage, to reconcile him to himſelf. Becauſe the world has ſometimes paſſed an unjuſt ſentence, he readily concludes the ſentence unjuſt by which his performance is condemned; becauſe ſome have been exalted above their merits by partiality, he is ſure to aſcribe the ſucceſs of a rival, not to the merit of his work, but the zeal of his patrons. Upon the whole, as the author ſeems to ſhare all the common miſeries of life, he appears to partake likewiſe of its lenitives and abatements.

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THE HISTORY OF RASSELAS, PRINCE OF ABISSINIA.

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This work was publiſhed in *March* or *April* 1759. Dr. *Johnſon* wrote it in order to defray the expenſes of his mother's funeral, and pay ſome little debts which ſhe had left. He told Sir *Joſhua Reynolds* that he compoſed it in the evenings of one week, ſent it to the preſs in portions as it was written, and had never ſince read it over. Mr. *Strahan*, Mr. *Johnſton*, and Mr. *Dodſley*, purchaſed it for a hundred pounds, but afterwards paid him twenty-five pounds more, when it came to a ſecond edition. None of his writings has been ſo extenſively diffuſed over Europe: for it has been tranſlated into moſt, if not all, of the modern languages. BOSWELL. C.

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THE

HISTORY

OF

RASSELAS,

PRINCE OF ABISSINIA.

CHAP. I.

DESCRIPTION OF A PALACE IN A VALLEY.

YE who liſten with credulity to the whiſpers of fancy, and purſue with eagerneſs the phantoms of hope; who expect that age will perform the promiſes of youth, and that the deficiencies of the preſent day will be ſupplied by the morrow; attend to the hiſtory of Raſſelas, Prince of Abiſſinia.

Raſſelas was the fourth ſon of the mighty emperour, in whoſe dominions the Father of Waters begins his courſe; whoſe bounty pours down the ſtreams of plenty, and ſcatters over half the world the harveſts of Egypt.

According to the cuſtom which has deſcended from age to age among the monarchs of the torrid zone, Raſſelas was confined in a private palace, with the other ſons and daughters of Abiſſinian royalty, till the order of ſucceſſion ſhould call him to the throne.

The place, which the wiſdom or policy of antiquity had deſtined for the reſidence of the Abiſſinian princes, was

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was a ſpacious valley in the kingdom of Amhara, ſurrounded on every ſide by mountains, of which the ſummits overhang the middle part. The only paſſage, by which it could be entered, was a cavern that paſſed under a rock, of which it has long been diſputed whether it was the work of nature or of human induſtry. The outlet of the cavern was concealed by thick wood, and the mouth which opened into the valley was cloſed with gates of iron, forged by the artificers of ancient days, ſo maſſy that no man could without the help of engines open or ſhut them.

From the mountains on every ſide, rivulets deſcended that filled all the valley with verdure and fertility, and formed a lake in the middle inhabited by fiſh of every ſpecies, and frequented by every fowl whom nature has taught to dip the wing in water. This lake diſcharged its ſuperfluities by a ſtream which entered a dark cleft of the mountain on the northern ſide, and fell with dreadful noiſe from precipice to precipice till it was heard no more.

The ſides of the mountains were covered with trees, the banks of the brooks were diverſified with flowers; every blaſt ſhook ſpices from the rocks, and every month dropped fruits upon the ground. All animals that bite the graſs, or browſe the ſhrub, whether wild or tame, wandered in this extenſive circuit, ſecured from beaſts of prey by the mountains which confined them. On one part were flocks and herds feeding in the paſtures, on another all the beaſts of chaſe friſking in the lawns; the ſprightly kid was bounding on the rocks, the ſubtle monkey frolicking in the trees, and the ſolemn elephant repoſing in the ſhade. All the diverſities

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diverſities of the world were brought together, the bleſſings of nature were collected, and its evils extracted and excluded.

The valley, wide and fruitful, ſupplied its inhabitants with the neceſſaries of life; and all delights and ſuperfluities were added at the annual viſit which the emperour paid his children, when the iron gate was opened to the ſound of muſick; and during eight days every one that reſided in the valley was required to propoſe whatever might contribute to make ſecluſion pleaſant, to fill up the vacancies of attention, and leſſen the tediouſneſs of time. Every deſire was immediately granted. All the artificers of pleaſure were called to gladden the feſtivity; the muſicians exerted the power of harmony, and the dancers ſhewed their activity before the princes, in hope that they ſhould paſs their lives in this bliſsful captivity, to which thoſe only were admitted whoſe performance was thought able to add novelty to luxury. Such was the appearance of ſecurity and delight which this retirement afforded, that they, to whom it was new, always deſired that it might be perpetual; and as thoſe, on whom the iron gate had once cloſed, were never ſuffered to return, the effect of long experience could not be known. Thus every year produced new ſchemes of delight, and new competitors for impriſonment.

The palace ſtood on an eminence raiſed about thirty paces above the ſurface of the lake. It was divided into many ſquares or courts, built with greater or leſs magnificence, according to the rank of thoſe for whom they were deſigned. The roofs were turned into arches of maſſy ſtone, joined by a cement that grew harder

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by time, and the building ſtood from century to century deriding the ſolſtitial rains and equinoctial hurricanes, without need of reparation.

This houſe, which was ſo large as to be fully known to none but ſome ancient officers who ſucceſſively inherited the ſecrets of the place, was built as if ſuſpicion herſelf had dictated the plan. To every room there was an open and ſecret paſſage, every ſquare had a communication with the reſt, either from the upper ſtories by private galleries, or by ſubterranean paſſages from the lower apartments. Many of the columns had unſuſpected cavities, in which a long race of monarchs had repoſited their treaſures. They then cloſed up the opening with marble, which was never to be removed but in the utmoſt exigencies of the kingdom; and recorded their accumulations in a book which was itſelf concealed in a tower not entered but by the emperour, attended by the prince who ſtood next in ſucceſſion.

CHAP. II.

THE DISCONTENT OF RASSELAS IN THE HAPPY VALLEY.

HERE the ſons and daughters of Abiſſinia lived only to know the ſoft viciſſitudes of pleaſure and repoſe, attended by all that were ſkilful to delight, and gratified with whatever the ſenſes can enjoy. They wandered in gardens of fragrance, and ſlept in the fortreſſes of ſecurity. Every art was practiſed to make them pleaſed with their own condition. The ſages who inſtructed

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inſtructed them, told them of nothing but the miſeries of publick life, and deſcribed all beyond the mountains as regions of calamity, where diſcord was always raging, and where man preyed upon man.

To heighten their opinion of their own felicity, they were daily entertained with ſongs, the ſubject of which was the *happy valley*. Their appetites were excited by frequent enumerations of different enjoyments, and revelry and merriment was the buſineſs of every hour from the dawn of morning to the cloſe of even.

Theſe methods were generally ſucceſsful; few of the princes had ever wiſhed to enlarge their bounds, but paſſed their lives in full conviction that they had all within their reach that art or nature could beſtow, and pitied thoſe whom fate had excluded from this ſeat of tranquillity, as the ſport of chance and the ſlaves of miſery.

Thus they roſe in the morning and lay down at night, pleaſed with each other and with themſelves, all but Raſſelas, who in the twenty-ſixth year of his age began to withdraw himſelf from their paſtimes and aſſemblies, and to delight in ſolitary walks and ſilent meditation. He often ſat before tables covered with luxury, and forgot to taſte the dainties that were placed before him: he roſe abruptly in the midſt of the ſong, and haſtily retired beyond the ſound of muſick. His attendants obſerved the change, and endeavoured to renew his love of pleaſure: he neglected their officiouſneſs, repulſed their invitations, and ſpent day after day on the banks of rivulets ſheltered with trees, where he ſometimes liſtened to the birds in the branches, ſometimes obſerved the fiſh playing in the ſtream,

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and anon caſt his eyes upon the paſtures and mountains filled with animals, of which ſome were biting the herbage, and ſome ſleeping among the buſhes.

This ſingularity of his humour made him much obſerved. One of the Sages, in whoſe converſation he had formerly delighted, followed him ſecretly, in hope of diſcovering the cauſe of his diſquiet. Raſſelas, who knew not that any one was near him, having for ſome time fixed his eyes upon the goats that were brouſing among the rocks, began to compare their condition with his own.

"What," ſaid he, "makes the difference between man and all the reſt of the animal creation? Every beaſt that ſtrays beſide me has the ſame corporal neceſſities with myſelf; he is hungry and crops the graſs, he is thirſty and drinks the ſtream, his thirſt and hunger are appeaſed, he is ſatisfied and ſleeps: he riſes again and is hungry, he is again fed and is at reſt. I am hungry and thirſty like him, but when thirſt and hunger ceaſe I am not at reſt; I am, like him, pained with want, but am not, like him, ſatisfied with fulneſs. The intermediate hours are tedious and gloomy; I long again to be hungry that I may again quicken my attention. The birds peck the berries or the corn, and fly away to the groves, where they ſit in ſeeming happineſs on the branches, and waſte their lives in tuning one unvaried ſeries of ſounds. I likewiſe can call the lutaniſt and the ſinger, but the ſounds that pleaſed me yeſterday weary me to-day, and will grow yet more wearieſome to-morrow. I can diſcover within me no power of perception which is not glutted with its proper pleaſure, yet I do not feel myſelf delighted. Man ſurely

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ſurely has ſome latent ſenſe for which this place affords no gratification, or he has ſome deſires diſtinct from ſenſe, which muſt be ſatisfied before he can be happy."

After this he lifted up his head, and ſeeing the moon riſing, walked towards the palace. As he paſſed through the fields, and ſaw the animals around him, "Ye," ſaid he, "are happy, and need not envy me that walk thus among you, burdened with myſelf; nor do I, ye gentle beings, envy your felicity; for it is not the felicity of man. I have many diſtreſſes from which ye are free; I fear pain when I do not feel it; I ſometimes ſhrink at evils recollected, and ſometimes ſtart at evils anticipated: ſurely the equity of Providence has balanced peculiar ſufferings with peculiar enjoyments."

With obſervations like theſe the prince amuſed himſelf as he returned, uttering them with a plaintive voice, yet with a look that diſcovered him to feel ſome complacence in his own perſpicacity, and to receive ſome ſolace of the miſeries of life, from conſciouſneſs of the delicacy with which he felt, and the eloquence with which he bewailed them. He mingled cheerfully in the diverſions of the evening, and all rejoiced to find that his heart was lightened.

CHAP. III.

THE WANTS OF HIM THAT WANTS NOTHING.

On the next day his old inſtructor, imagining that he had now made himſelf acquainted with his diſeaſe of mind, was in hope of curing it by counſel, and officiouſly

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ſought an opportunity of conference, which the prince, having long conſidered him as one whoſe intellects were exhauſted, was not very willing to afford: "Why," ſaid he, "does this man thus obtrude upon me; ſhall I be never ſuffered to forget thoſe lectures which pleaſed only while they were new, and to become new again muſt be forgotten?" He then walked into the wood, and compoſed himſelf to his uſual meditations; when before his thoughts had taken any ſettled form, he perceived his purſuer at his ſide, and was at firſt prompted by his impatience to go haſtily away; but, being unwilling to offend a man whom he had once reverenced and ſtill loved, he invited him to ſit down with him on the bank.

The old man thus encouraged, began to lament the change which had been lately obſerved in the prince, and to inquire why he ſo often retired from the pleaſures of the palace, to lonelineſs and ſilence. "I fly from pleaſure, ſaid the prince, becauſe pleaſure has ceaſed to pleaſe; I am lonely becauſe I am miſerable, and am unwilling to cloud with my preſence the happineſs of others." "You, Sir, ſaid the ſage, are the firſt who has complained of miſery in the *happy valley*. I hope to convince you that your complaints have no real cauſe. You are here in full poſſeſſion of all that the emperour of Abiſſinia can beſtow; here is neither labour to be endured nor danger to be dreaded, yet here is all that labour or danger can procure or purchaſe. Look round and tell me which of your wants is without ſupply: if you want nothing, how are you unhappy?"

"That I want nothing," ſaid the prince, "or that I know

know not what I want, is the cauſe of my complaint; if I had any known want, I ſhould have a certain wiſh; that wiſh would excite endeavour, and I ſhould not then repine to ſee the ſun move ſo ſlowly towards the weſtern mountain, or lament when the day breaks and ſleep will no longer hide me from myſelf. When I ſee the kids and the lambs chaſing one another, I fancy that I ſhould be happy if I had ſomething to purſue. But, poſſeſſing all that I can want, I find one day and one hour exactly like another, except that the latter is ſtill more tedious than the former. Let your experience inform me how the day may now ſeem as ſhort as in my childhood, while nature was yet freſh, and every moment ſhewed me what I never had obſerved before. I have already enjoyed too much; give me ſomething to deſire."

The old man was ſurpriſed at this new ſpecies of affliction, and knew not what to reply, yet was unwilling to be ſilent. "Sir, ſaid he, if you had ſeen the miſeries of the world, you would know how to value your preſent ſtate." "Now, ſaid the prince, you have given me ſomething to deſire; I ſhall long to ſee the miſeries of the world, ſince the ſight of them is neceſſary to happineſs."

CHAP. IV.

THE PRINCE CONTINUES TO GRIEVE AND MUSE.

At this time the ſound of muſick proclaimed the hour of repaſt, and the converſation was concluded. The old man went away ſufficiently diſcontented, to find

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that his reaſonings had produced the only concluſion which they were intended to prevent. But in the decline of life ſhame and grief are of ſhort duration; whether it be that we bear eaſily what we have borne long, or that, finding ourſelves in age leſs regarded, we leſs regard others; or, that we look with ſlight regard upon afflictions, to which we know that the hand of death is about to put an end.

The prince, whoſe views were extended to a wider ſpace, could not ſpeedily quiet his emotions. He had been before terrified at the length of life which nature promiſed him, becauſe he conſidered that in a long time much muſt be endured; he now rejoiced in his youth, becauſe in many years much might be done.

This firſt beam of hope, that had been ever darted into his mind, rekindled youth in his cheeks, and doubled the luſtre of his eyes. He was fired with the deſire of doing ſomething, though he knew not yet with diſtinctneſs, either end or means.

He was now no longer gloomy and unſocial; but, conſidering himſelf as maſter of a ſecret ſtock of happineſs, which he could enjoy only by concealing it, he affected to be buſy in all ſchemes of diverſion, and endeavoured to make others pleaſed with the ſtate of which he himſelf was weary. But pleaſures never can be ſo multiplied or continued, as not to leave much of life unemployed; there were many hours, both of the night and day, which he could ſpend without ſuſpicion in ſolitary thought. The load of life was much lightened: he went eagerly into the aſſemblies, becauſe he ſuppoſed the frequency of his preſence neceſſary to the ſucceſs of his purpoſes; he retired gladly to privacy, becauſe he had now a ſubject of thought.

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His chief amuſement was to picture to himſelf that world which he had never ſeen; to place himſelf in various conditions; to be entangled in imaginary difficulties, and to be engaged in wild adventures: but his benevolence always terminated his projects in the relief of diſtreſs, the detection of fraud, the defeat of oppreſſion, and the diffuſion of happineſs.

Thus paſſed twenty months of the life of Raſſelas. He buſied himſelf ſo intenſely in viſionary buſtle, that he forgot his real ſolitude, and, amidſt hourly preparations for the various incidents of human affairs, neglected to conſider by what means he ſhould mingle with mankind.

One day, as he was ſitting on a bank, he feigned to himſelf an orphan virgin robbed of her little portion by a treacherous lover, and crying after him for reſtitution and redreſs. So ſtrongly was the image impreſſed upon his mind, that he ſtarted up in the maid's defence, and ran forward to ſeize the plunderer with all the eagerneſs of real purſuit. Fear naturally quickens the flight of guilt. Raſſelas could not catch the fugitive with his utmoſt efforts; but, reſolving to weary by perſeverance, him whom he could not ſurpaſs in ſpeed, he preſſed on till the foot of the mountain ſtopped his courſe.

Here he recollected himſelf, and ſmiled at his own uſeleſs impetuoſity. Then raiſing his eyes to the mountain, "This, ſaid he, is the fatal obſtacle that hinders at once the enjoyment of pleaſure, and the exerciſe of virtue. How long is it that my hopes and wiſhes have flown beyond this boundary of my life, which yet I never have attempted to ſurmount!"

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Struck with this reflection, he ſat down to muſe; and remembered, that ſince he firſt reſolved to eſcape from his confinement, the ſun had paſſed twice over him in his annual courſe. He now felt a degree of regret with which he had never been before acquainted. He conſidered how much might have been done in the time which had paſſed, and left nothing real behind it. He compared twenty months with the life of man. "In life, ſaid he, is not to be counted the ignorance of infancy, or imbecility of age. We are long before we are able to think, and we ſoon ceaſe from the power of acting. The true period of human exiſtence may be reaſonably eſtimated at forty years, of which I have muſed away the four and twentieth part. What I have loſt was certain, for I have certainly poſſeſſed it; but of twenty months to come who can aſſure me?"

The conſciouſneſs of his own folly pierced him deeply, and he was long before he could be reconciled to himſelf. "The reſt of my time ſaid he, has been loſt by the crime or folly of my anceſtors, and the abſurd inſtitutions of my country; I remember it with diſguſt, yet without remorſe: but the months that have paſſed ſince new light darted into my ſoul, ſince I formed a ſcheme of reaſonable felicity, have been ſquandered by my own fault. I have loſt that which can never be reſtored: I have ſeen the ſun riſe and ſet for twenty months, an idle gazer on the light of heaven: In this time the birds have left the neſt of their mother, and committed themſelves to the woods and to the ſkies: the kid has forſaken the teat, and learned by degrees to climb the rocks in queſt of independent ſuſtenance. I only have made no advances, but

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but am ſtill helpleſs and ignorant. The moon, by more than twenty changes, admoniſhed me of the flux of life; the ſtream that rolled before my feet upbraided my inactivity. I ſat feaſting on intellectual luxury, regardleſs alike of the examples of the earth, and the inſtructions of the planets. Twenty months are paſſed, who ſhall reſtore them?"

Theſe ſorrowful meditations faſtened upon his mind; he paſſed four months in reſolving to loſe no more time in idle reſolves, and was awakened to more vigorous exertion, by hearing a maid, who had broken a porcelain cup, remark, that what cannot be repaired is not to be regretted.

This was obvious; and Raſſelas reproached himſelf that he had not diſcovered it, having not known, or not conſidered, how many uſeful hints are obtained by chance, and how often the mind, hurried by her own ardour to diſtant views, neglects the truths that lie open before her. He for a few hours, regretted his regret, and from that time bent his whole mind upon the means of eſcaping from the valley of happineſs.

CHAP. V.

THE PRINCE MEDITATES HIS ESCAPE.

He now found that it would be very difficult to effect that which it was very eaſy to ſuppoſe effected. When he looked round about him, he ſaw himſelf confined by the bars of nature which had never yet been broken, and by the gate, through which none that once had paſſed it were ever able to return. He was now impatient

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patient as an eagle in a grate. He paſſed week after week in clambering the mountains, to ſee if there was any aperture which the buſhes might conceal, but found all the ſummits inacceſſible by their prominence. The iron gate he deſpaired to open; for it was not only ſecured with all the power of art, but was always watched by ſucceſſive ſentinels, and was by its poſition expoſed to the perpetual obſervation of all the inhabitants.

He then examined the cavern through which the waters of the lake were diſcharged; and, looking down at a time when the ſun ſhone ſtrongly upon its mouth, he diſcovered it to be full of broken rocks, which, though they permitted the ſtream to flow through many narrow paſſages, would ſtop any body of ſolid bulk. He returned diſcouraged and dejected; but, having now known the bleſſing of hope, reſolved never to deſpair.

In theſe fruitleſs ſearches he ſpent ten months. The time, however, paſſed cheerfully away: in the morning he roſe with new hope, in the evening applauded his own diligence, and in the night ſlept ſound after his fatigue. He met a thouſand amuſements which beguiled his labour, and diverſified his thoughts. He diſcerned the various inſtincts of animals, and properties of plants, and found the place replete with wonders, of which he purpoſed to ſolace himſelf with the contemplation, if he ſhould never be able to accompliſh his flight; rejoicing that his endeavours, though yet unſucceſsful, had ſupplied him with a ſource of inexhauſtible inquiry.

But his original curioſity was not yet abated; he reſolved

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reſolved to obtain ſome knowledge of the ways of men. His wiſh ſtill continued, but his hope grew leſs. He ceaſed to ſurvey any longer the walls of his priſon, and ſpared to ſearch by new toils for interſtices which he knew could not be found, yet determined to keep his deſign always in view, and lay hold on any expedient that time ſhould offer.

CHAP. VI.

A DISSERTATION ON THE ART OF FLYING.

AMONG the artiſts that had been allured into the happy valley, to labour for the accommodation and pleaſure of its inhabitants, was a man eminent for his knowledge of the mechanick powers, who had contrived many engines both of uſe and recreation. By a wheel, which the ſtream turned, he forced the water into a tower, whence it was diſtributed to all the apartments of the palace. He erected a pavilion in the garden, around which he kept the air always cool by artifical ſhowers. One of the groves, appropriated to the ladies, was ventilated by fans, to which the rivulet that ran through it gave a conſtant motion; and inſtruments of ſoft muſick were placed at proper diſtances, of which ſome played by the impulſe of the wind, and ſome by the power of the ſtream.

This artiſt was ſometimes viſited by Raſſelas, who was pleaſed with every kind of knowledge, imagining that the time would come when all his acquiſitions ſhould be of uſe to him in the open world. He came one

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one day to amuſe himſelf in his uſual manner, and found the maſter buſy in building a ſailing chariot: he ſaw that the deſign was practicable upon a level ſurface, and with expreſſions of great eſteem ſolicited its completion. The workman was pleaſed to find himſelf ſo much regarded by the prince, and reſolved to gain yet higher honours. "Sir, ſaid he, you have ſeen but a ſmall part of what the mechanick ſciences can perform. I have been long of opinion, that inſtead of the tardy conveyance of ſhips and chariots, man might uſe the ſwifter migration of wings; that the fields of air are open to knowledge, and that only ignorance and idleneſs need crawl upon the ground."

This hint rekindled the prince's deſire of paſſing the mountains; having ſeen what the mechaniſt had already performed, he was willing to fancy that he could do more; yet reſolved to inquire further, before he ſuffered hope to afflict him by diſappointment. "I am afraid, ſaid he to the artiſt, that your imagination prevails over your ſkill, and that you now tell me rather what you wiſh, than what you know. Every animal has his element aſſigned him; the birds have the air, and man and beaſts the earth." "So, replied the mechaniſt, fiſhes have the water, in which yet beaſts can ſwim by nature, and men by art. He that can ſwim needs not deſpair to fly: to ſwim is to fly in a groſſer fluid, and to fly is to ſwim in a ſubtler. We are only to proportion our power of reſiſtance to the different denſity of matter through which we are to paſs. You will be neceſſarily upborn by the air, if you can renew any impulſe upon it, faſter than the air can recede from the preſſure."

"But

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"But the exercise of swimming, said the prince, is very laborious; the strongest limbs are soon wearied; I am afraid the act of flying will be yet more violent, and wings will be of no great use, unless we can fly further than we can swim."

"The labour of rising from the ground, said the artist, will be great, as we see it in the heavier domestick fowls, but as we mount higher, the earth's attraction, and the body's gravity, will be gradually diminished, till we shall arrive at a region where the man will float in the air without any tendency to fall: no care will then be necessary but to move forwards, which the gentlest impulse will effect. You, Sir, whose curiosity is so extensive, will easily conceive with what pleasure a philosopher, furnished with wings, and hovering in the sky, would see the earth, and all its inhabitants, rolling beneath him, and presenting to him successively, by its diurnal motion, all the countries within the same parallel. How must it amuse the pendent spectator to see the moving scene of land and ocean, cities and deserts! To survey with equal security the marts of trade, and the fields of battle; mountains infested by barbarians, and fruitful regions gladdened by plenty, and lulled by peace? How easily shall we then trace the Nile through all his passage; pass over to distant regions, and examine the face of nature from one extremity of the earth to the other!"

"All this, said the prince, is much to be desired; but I am afraid that no man will be able to breathe in these regions of speculation and tranquillity. I have been told, that respiration is difficult upon lofty mountains,

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tains, yet from theſe precipices, though ſo high as to produce great tenuity of air, it is very eaſy to fall; therefore I ſuſpect, that from any height, where life can be ſupported, there may be danger of too quick deſcent."

"Nothing replied the artiſt, will ever be attempted, if all poſſible objections muſt be firſt overcome. If you will favour my project, I will try the firſt flight at my own hazard. I have conſidered the ſtructure of all volant animals, and find the folding continuity of the bat's wings moſt eaſily accommodated to the human form. Upon this model I ſhall begin my taſk to-morrow, and in a year expect to tower into the air beyond the malice and purſuit of man. But I will work only on this condition, that the art ſhall not be divulged, and that you ſhall not require me to make wings for any but ourſelves."

"Why, ſaid Raſſelas, ſhould you envy others ſo great an advantage? All ſkill ought to be exerted for univerſal good; every man has owed much to others, and ought to repay the kindneſs that he has received."

"If men were all virtuous, returned the artiſt, I ſhould with great alacrity teach them all to fly. But what would be the ſecurity of the good, if the bad could at pleaſure invade them from the ſky? Againſt an army ſailing through the clouds, neither walls, nor mountains, nor ſeas, could afford any ſecurity. A flight of northern ſavages might hover in the wind, and light at once with irreſtible violence upon the capital of a fruitful region that was rolling under them. Even this valley, the retreat of princes, the abode of happineſs, might

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might be violated by the ſudden deſcent of ſome of the naked nations that ſwarm on the coaſt of the ſouthern ſea."

The prince promiſed ſecrecy, and waited for the performance, not wholly hopeleſs of ſucceſs. He viſited the work from time to time, obſerved its progreſs, and remarked many ingenious contrivances to facilitate motion, and unite levity with ſtrength. The artiſt was every day more certain that he ſhould leave vultures and eagles behind him, and the contagion of his confidence ſeized upon the prince.

In a year the wings were finiſhed, and, on a morning appointed, the maker appeared furniſhed for flight on a little promontory: he waved his pinions a while to gather air, then leaped from his ſtand, and in an inſtant dropped into the lake. His wings, which were of no uſe in the air, ſuſtained him in the water, and the prince drew him to land, half dead with terrour and vexation.

CHAP. VII.

THE PRINCE FINDS A MAN OF LEARNING.

THE prince was not much afflicted by this diſaſter, having ſuffered himſelf to hope for a happier event, only becauſe he had no other means of eſcape in view. He ſtill perſiſted in his deſign to leave the happy valley by the firſt opportunity.

His imagination was now at a ſtand; he had no proſpect of entering into the world; and notwithſtanding all his endeavours to ſupport himſelf, diſcontent by

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degrees preyed upon him, and he began again to loſe his thoughts in ſadneſs, when the rainy ſeaſon, which in theſe countries is periodical, made it inconvenient to wander in the woods.

The rain continued longer and with more violence than had been ever known: the clouds broke on the ſurrounding mountains, and the torrents ſtreamed into the plain on every ſide, till the cavern was too narrow to diſcharge the water. The lake overflowed its banks, and all the level of the valley was covered with the inundation. The eminence, on which the palace was built, and ſome other ſpots of riſing ground, were all that the eye could now diſcover. The herds and flocks left the paſtures, and both the wild beaſts and the tame retreated to the mountains.

This inundation confined all the princes to domeſtick amuſements, and the attention of Raſſelas was particularly ſeized by a poem, which Imlac rehearſed, upon the various conditions of humanity. He commanded the poet to attend him in his apartment, and recite his verſes a ſecond time; then entering into familiar talk, he thought himſelf happy in having found a man who knew the world ſo well, and could ſo ſkilfully paint the ſcenes of life. He aſked a thouſand queſtions about things, to which, though common to all other mortals, his confinement from childhood had kept him a ſtranger. The poet pitied his ignorance, and loved his curioſity, and entertained him from day to day with novelty and inſtruction, ſo that the prince regretted the neceſſity of ſleep, and longed till the morning ſhould renew his pleaſure.

As they were ſitting together, the prince commanded Imlac.

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Imlac to relate his hiſtory, and to tell by what accident he was forced, or by what motive induced, to cloſe his life in the happy valley. As he was going to begin his narrative, Raſſelas was called to a concert, and obliged to reſtrain his curioſity till the evening.

CHAP. VIII.

THE HISTORY OF IMLAC.

THE cloſe of the day is, in the regions of the torrid zone, the only ſeaſon of diverſion and entertainment, and it was therefore midnight before the muſick ceaſed, and the princeſſes retired. Raſſelas then called for his companion, and required him to begin the ſtory of his life.

"Sir, ſaid Imlac, my hiſtory will not be long: the life that is devoted to knowledge paſſes ſilently away, and is very little diverſified by events. To talk in publick, to think in ſolitude, to read and to hear, to inquire, and anſwer inquiries, is the buſineſs of a ſcholar. He wanders about the world without pomp or terrour, and is neither known nor valued but by men like himſelf.

"I was born in the kingdom of Goiama, at no great diſtance from the fountain of the Nile. My father was a wealthy merchant, who traded between the inland countries of Africk and the ports of the Red Sea. He was honeſt, frugal, and diligent, but of mean ſentiments, and narrow comprehenſion: he deſired only to be rich, and to conceal his riches, leſt he ſhould be ſpoiled hy the governours of the province."

"Surely, ſaid the prince, my father muſt be negligent of his charge, if any man in his dominions dares

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take that which belongs to another. Does he not know that kings are accountable for injuſtice permitted as well as done? If I were emperour, not the meaneſt of my ſubjects ſhould be oppreſſed with impunity. My blood boils when I am told that a merchant durſt not enjoy his honeſt gains for fear of loſing them by the rapacity of power. Name the governour who robbed the people, that I may declare his crimes to the emperour."

"Sir, ſaid Imlac, your ardour is the natural effect of virtue animated by youth: the time will come when you will acquit your father, and perhaps hear with leſs impatience of the governour. Oppreſſion is, in the Abiſſinian dominions, neither frequent nor tolerated; but no form of government has been yet diſcovered, by which cruelty can be wholly prevented. Subordination ſuppoſes power on one part, and ſubjection on the other; and if power be in the hands of men, it will ſometimes be abuſed. The vigilance of the ſupreme magiſtrate may do much, but much will ſtill remain undone. He can never know all the crimes that are committed, and can ſeldom puniſh all that he knows."

"This, ſaid the prince, I do not underſtand, but I had rather hear thee than diſpute. Continue thy narration."

"My father, proceeded Imlac, originally intended that I ſhould have no other education, than ſuch as might qualify me for commerce; and diſcovering in me great ſtrength of memory, and quickneſs of apprehenſion, often declared his hope that I ſhould be ſome time the richeſt man in Abiſſinia."

"Why, ſaid the prince, did thy father deſire the increaſe

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increaſe of his wealth, when it was already greater than he durſt diſcover or enjoy? I am unwilling to doubt thy veracity, yet inconſiſtencies cannot both be true."

"Inconſiſtencies, anſwered Imlac, cannot both be right, but, imputed to man, they may both be true. Yet diverſity is not inconſiſtency. My father might expect a time of greater ſecurity. However, ſome deſire is neceſſary to keep life in motion, and he, whoſe real wants are ſupplied, muſt admit thoſe of fancy."

"This, ſaid the prince, I can in ſome meaſure conceive. I repent that I interrupted thee."

"With this hope, proceeded Imlac, he ſent me to ſchool; but when I had once found the delight of knowledge, and felt the pleaſure of intelligence and the pride of invention, I began ſilently to deſpiſe riches and determined to diſappoint the purpoſe of my father, whoſe groſſneſs of conception raiſed my pity. I was twenty years old before his tenderneſs would expoſe me to the fatigue of travel, in which time I had been inſtructed, by ſucceſſive maſters, in all the literature of my native country. As every hour taught me ſomething new, I lived in a continual courſe of gratifications; but as I advanced towards manhood, I loſt much of the reverence with which I had been uſed to look on my inſtructors; becauſe, when the leſſon was ended, I did not find them wiſer or better than common men.

"At length my father reſolved to initiate me in commerce, and opening one of his ſubterranean treaſuries, counted out ten thouſand pieces of gold. This, young man, ſaid he, is the ſtock with which you muſt negociate. I began with leſs than the fifth part, and you ſee how diligence and parſimony have increaſed it.

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This is your own, to waſte or to improve. If you ſquander it by negligence or caprice, you muſt wait for my death before you will be rich: if, in four years, you double your ſtock, we will thenceforward let ſubordination ceaſe, and live together as friends and partners; for he ſhall always be equal with me, who is equally ſkilled in the art of growing rich.

"We laid our money upon camels, concealed in bales of cheap goods, and travelled to the ſhore of the Red Sea. When I caſt my eye on the expanſe of waters, my heart bounded like that of a priſoner eſcaped. I felt an unextinguiſhable curioſity kindle in my mind, and reſolved to ſnatch this opportunity of ſeeing the manners of other nations, and of learning ſciences unknown in Abiſſinia.

"I remembered that my father had obliged me to the improvement of my ſtock, not by a promiſe which I ought not to violate, but by a penalty which I was at liberty to incur; and therefore determined to gratify my predominant deſire, and by drinking at the fountains of knowledge, to quench the thirſt of curioſity.

"As I was ſuppoſed to trade without connexion with my father, it was eaſy for me to become acquainted with the maſter of a ſhip, and procure a paſſage to ſome other country. I had no motives of choice to regulate my voyage; it was ſufficient for me that wherever I wandered, I ſhould ſee a country which I had not ſeen before. I therefore entered a ſhip bound for Surat, having left a letter for my father declaring my intention."

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CHAP. IX.

THE HISTORY OF IMLAC CONTINUED.

"WHEN I first entered upon the world of waters, and lost sight of land, I looked round about me with pleasing terrour, and thinking my soul enlarged by the boundless prospect, imagined that I could gaze round for ever without satiety; but, in a short time, I grew weary of looking on barren uniformity, where I could only see again what I had already seen. I then descended into the ship, and doubted for a while whether all my future pleasures would not end like this, in disgust and disappointment. Yet, surely, said I, the ocean and the land are very different; the only variety of water is rest and motion, but the earth has mountains and vallies, deserts and cities: it is inhabited by men of different customs and contrary opinions; and I may hope to find variety in life, though I should miss it in nature.

"With this thought I quieted my mind, and amused myself during the voyage, sometimes by learning from the sailors the art of navigation, which I have never practised, and sometimes by forming schemes for my conduct in different situations, in not one of which I have been ever placed.

"I was almost weary of my naval amusements when we landed safely at Surat. I secured my money, and purchasing some commodities for show, joined myself to a caravan that was passing into the inland country. My companions, for some reason or other, conjecturing that I was rich, and, by my inquiries and admiration, finding that I was ignorant, considered me as a novice

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whom they had a right to cheat, and who was to learn, at the uſual expenſe, the art of fraud. They expoſed me to the theft of ſervants, and the exaction of officers, and ſaw me plundered upon falſe pretences, without any advantage to themſelves, but that of rejoicing in the ſuperiority of their own knowledge."

"Stop a moment, ſaid the prince. Is there ſuch depravity in man, as that he ſhould injure another without benefit to himſelf? I can eaſily conceive that all are pleaſed with ſuperiority: but your ignorance was merely accidental, which being neither your crime nor your folly, could afford them no reaſon to applaud themſelves; and the knowledge which they had, and which you wanted, they might as effectually have ſhewn by warning, as betraying you."

"Pride, ſaid Imlac, is ſeldom delicate, it will pleaſe itſelf with very mean advantages; and envy feels not its own happineſs, but when it may be compared with the miſery of others. They were my enemies, becauſe they grieved to think me rich; and my oppreſſors, becauſe they delighted to find me weak."

"Proceed, ſaid the prince: I doubt not of the facts which you relate, but imagine that you impute them to miſtaken motives."

"In this company, ſaid Imlac, I arrived at Agra, the capital of Indoſtan, the city in which the Great Mogul commonly reſides. I applied myſelf to the language of the country, and in a few months was able to converſe with the learned men; ſome of whom I found moroſe and reſerved, and others eaſy and communicative; ſome were unwilling to teach another what they had with difficulty learned themſelves; and ſome ſhewed that

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that the end of their ſtudies was to gain the dignity of inſtructing.

" To the tutor of the young princes I recommended myſelf ſo much, that I was preſented to the emperour as a man of uncommon knowledge. The emperour aſked me many queſtions concerning my country and my travels; and though I cannot now recollect any thing that he uttered above the power of a common man, he diſmiſſed me aſtoniſhed at his wiſdom, and enamoured of his goodneſs.

" My credit was now ſo high, that the merchants, with whom I had travelled, applied to me for recommendations to the ladies of the Court. I was ſurpriſed at their confidence of ſolicitation, and gently reproached them with their practices on the road. They heard me with cold indifference, and ſhewed no tokens of ſhame or ſorrow.

" They then urged their requeſt with the offer of a bribe; but what I would not do for kindneſs, I would not do for money; and refuſed them, not becauſe they had injured me, but becauſe I would not enable them to injure others; for I knew they would have made uſe of my credit to cheat thoſe who ſhould buy their wares.

" Having reſided at Agra till there was no more to be learned, I travelled into Perſia, where I ſaw many remains of ancient magnificence, and obſerved many new accommodations of life. The Perſians are a nation eminently ſocial, and their aſſemblies afforded me daily opportunities of remarking characters and manners, and of tracing human nature through all its variations.

" From Perſia I paſſed into Arabia, where I ſaw a nation at once paſtoral and warlike; who live without

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without any ſettled habitation; whoſe only wealth is their flocks and herds; and who have yet carried on, through all ages, an hereditary war with all mankind, though they neither covet nor envy their poſſeſſions."

CHAP. X.

IMLAC'S HISTORY CONTINUED. A DISSERTATION UPON POETRY.

"WHEREVER I went, I found that poetry was conſidered as the higheſt learning, and regarded with a veneration ſomewhat approaching to that which man would pay to the Angelick Nature. And yet it fills me with wonder, that, in almoſt all countries, the moſt ancient poets are conſidered as the beſt: whether it be that every other kind of knowledge is an acquiſition gradually attained, and poetry is a gift conferred at once; or that the firſt poetry of every nation ſurpriſed them as a novelty, and retained the credit by conſent which it received by accident at firſt: or whether, as the province of poetry is to deſcribe Nature and Paſſion, which are always the ſame, the firſt writers took poſſeſſion of the moſt ſtriking objects for deſcription, and the moſt probable occurrences for fiction, and left nothing to thoſe that followed them, but tranſcription of the ſame events, and new combinations of the ſame images. Whatever be the reaſon, it is commonly obſerved that the early writers are in poſſeſſion of nature, and their followers

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followers of art: that the firſt excel in ſtrength and invention, and the latter in elegance and refinement.

"I was deſirous to add my name to this illuſtrious fraternity. I read all the poets of Perſia and Arabia, and was able to repeat by memory the volumes that are ſuſpended in the moſque of Mecca. But I ſoon found that no man was ever great by imitation. My deſire of excellence impelled me to transfer my attention to nature and to life. Nature was to be my ſubject, and men to be my auditors: I could never deſcribe what I had not ſeen: I could not hope to move thoſe with delight or terrour, whoſe intereſts and opinions I did not underſtand.

"Being now reſolved to be a Poet, I ſaw every thing with a new purpoſe; my ſphere of attention was ſuddenly magnified: no kind of knowledge was to be overlooked. I ranged mountains and deſerts for images and reſemblances, and pictured upon my mind every tree of the foreſt and flower of the valley. I obſerved with equal care the crags of the rock and the pinnacles of the palace. Sometimes I wandered along the mazes of the rivulet, and ſometimes watched the changes of the ſummer clouds. To a poet nothing can be uſeleſs. Whatever is beautiful, and whatever is dreadful, muſt be familiar to his imagination: he muſt be converſant with all that is awfully vaſt or elegantly little. The plants of the garden, the animals of the wood, the minerals of the earth, and meteors of the ſky, muſt all concur to ſtore his mind with inexhauſtible variety: for every idea is uſeful for the enforcement or decoration of moral or religious truth; and he, who knows moſt, will have moſt power of diverſifying his ſcenes, and

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and of gratifying his reader with remote allusions and unexpected inſtruction.

"All the appearances of nature I was therefore careful to ſtudy, and every country which I have ſurveyed, has contributed ſomething to my poetical powers."

"In ſo wide a ſurvey, ſaid the prince, you muſt ſurely have left much unobſerved. I have lived till now, within the circuit of theſe mountains, and yet cannot walk abroad without the ſight of ſomething which I had never beheld before, or never heeded."

"The buſineſs of a poet, ſaid Imlac, is to examine, not the individual, but the ſpecies; to remark general properties and large appearances; he does not number the ſtreaks of the tulip, or deſcribe the different ſhades in the verdure of the foreſt. He is to exhibit in his portraits of nature ſuch prominent and ſtriking features as recall the original to every mind; and muſt neglect the minuter diſcriminations, which one may have remarked, and another have neglected, for thoſe characteriſticks which are alike obvious to vigilance and careleſſneſs.

"But the knowledge of nature is only half the taſk of a poet; he muſt be acquainted likewiſe with all the modes of life. His character requires that he eſtimate the happineſs and miſery of every condition; obſerve the power of all the paſſions in all their combinations, and trace the changes of the human mind as they are modified by various inſtitutions, and accidental influences, of climate or cuſtom, from the ſprightlineſs of infancy to the deſpondence of decrepitude. He muſt diveſt himſelf of the prejudices of his age or country; he

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he muſt conſider right and wrong in their abſtracted and invariable ſtate; he muſt diſregard preſent laws and opinions, and riſe to general and tranſcendental truths, which will always be the ſame: he muſt therefore content himſelf with the ſlow progreſs of his name; contemn the applauſe of his own time, and commit his claims to the juſtice of poſterity. He muſt write as the interpreter of nature, and the legiſlator of mankind, and conſider himſelf as preſiding over the thoughts and manners of future generations; as a being ſuperior to time and place.

"His labour is not yet at an end: he muſt know many languages and many ſciences; and, that his ſtyle may be worthy of his thoughts, muſt, by inceſſant practice, familiarize to himſelf every delicacy of ſpeech and grace of harmony."

CHAP. XI.

IMLAC'S NARRATIVE CONTINUED. A HINT ON PILGRIMAGE.

IMLAC now felt the enthuſiaſtick fit, and was proceeding to aggrandize his own profeſſion, when the prince cried out, "Enough! thou has convinced me, that no human being can ever be a poet. Proceed with thy narration."

"To be a poet, ſaid Imlac, is indeed very difficult." "So difficult, returned the prince, that I will at preſent hear no more of his labours. Tell me whither you went when you had ſeen Perſia."

"From Perſia, ſaid the poet, I travelled through Syria,

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Syria, and for three years reſided in Paleſtine, where I converſed with great numbers of the northern and weſtern nations of Europe; the nations which are now in poſſeſſion of all power and all knowledge; whoſe armies are irreſiſtible, and whoſe fleets command the remoteſt parts of the globe. When I compared theſe men with the natives of our own kingdom, and thoſe that ſurround us, they appeared almoſt another order of beings. In their countries it is difficult to wiſh for any thing that may not be obtained: a thouſand arts, of which we never heard, are continually labouring for their convenience and pleaſure; and whatever their own climate has denied them is ſupplied by their commerce."

"By what means, ſaid the prince, are the Europeans thus powerful, or why, ſince they can ſo eaſily viſit Aſia and Africa for trade or conqueſt, cannot the Aſiaticks and Africans invade their coaſts, plant colonies in their ports, and give laws to their natural princes? The ſame wind that carries them back would bring us thither."

"They are more powerful, Sir, than we, anſwered Imlac, becauſe they are wiſer; knowledge will always predominate over ignorance, as man governs the other animals. But why their knowledge is more than ours, I know not what reaſon can be given, but the unſearchable will of the Supreme Being."

"When, ſaid the prince with a ſigh, ſhall I be able to viſit Paleſtine, and mingle with this mighty confluence of nations? Till that happy moment ſhall arrive, let me fill up the time with ſuch repreſentations as thou canſt give me. I am not ignorant of the motive that

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that aſſembles ſuch numbers in that place, and cannot but conſider it as the centre of wiſdom and piety, to which the beſt and wiſeſt men of every land muſt be continually reſorting."

"There are ſome nations, ſaid Imlac, that ſend few viſitants to Paleſtine: for many numerous and learned ſects in Europe concur to cenſure pilgrimage as ſuperſtitious, or deride it as ridiculous."

"You know, ſaid the prince, how little my life has made me acquainted with diverſity of opinions: it will be too long to hear the arguments on both ſides; you, that have conſidered them, tell me the reſult."

"Pilgrimage, ſaid Imlac, like many other acts of piety, may be reaſonable or ſuperſtitious, according to the principles upon which it is performed. Long journies in ſearch of truth are not commanded. Truth, ſuch as is neceſſary to the regulation of life, is always found where it is honeſtly ſought. Change of place is no natural cauſe of the increaſe of piety, for it inevitably produces diſſipation of mind. Yet, ſince men go every day to view the fields where great actions have been performed, and return with ſtronger impreſſions of the event, curioſity of the ſame kind may naturally diſpoſe us to view that country whence our religion had its beginning; and I believe no man ſurveys thoſe awful ſcenes without ſome confirmation of holy reſolutions. That the Supreme Being may be more eaſily propitiated in one place than in another, is the dream of idle ſuperſtition; but that ſome places may operate upon our own minds in an uncommon manner, is an opinion which

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which hourly experience will juſtify. He who ſuppoſes that his vices may be more ſucceſsfully combated in Paleſtine, will, perhaps, find himſelf miſtaken, yet he may go thither without folly: he who thinks they will be more freely pardoned, diſhonours at once his reaſon and religion."

"Theſe, ſaid the prince, are European diſtinctions. I will conſider them another time. What have you found to be the effect of knowledge? Are thoſe nations happier than we?"

"There is ſo much infelicity, ſaid the poet, in the world, that ſcarce any man has leiſure from his own diſtreſſes to eſtimate the comparative happineſs of others. Knowledge is certainly one of the means of pleaſure, as is confeſſed by the natural deſire which every mind feels of increaſing its ideas. Ignorance is mere privation, by which nothing can be produced: it is a vacuity in which the ſoul ſits motionleſs and torpid for want of attraction; and, without knowing why, we always rejoice when we learn, and grieve when we forget. I am therefore inclined to conclude, that if nothing counteracts the natural conſequence of learning, we grow more happy as our minds take a wider range.

"In enumerating the particular comforts of life, we ſhall find many advantages on the ſide of the Europeans. They cure wounds and diſeaſes with which we languiſh and periſh. We ſuffer inclemencies of weather which they can obviate. They have engines for the diſpatch of many laborious works, which we muſt perform by manual induſtry. There is ſuch

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communication between distant places, that one friend can hardly be said to be absent from another. Their policy removes all publick inconveniencies: they have roads cut through their mountains, and bridges laid upon their rivers. And, if we descend to the privacies of life, their habitations are more commodious, and their possessions are more secure."

"They are surely happy, said the prince, who have all these conveniencies, of which I envy none so much as the facility with which separated friends interchange their thoughts."

"The Europeans, answered Imlac, are less unhappy than we, but they are not happy. Human life is every where a state in which much is to be endured, and little to be enjoyed."

CHAP. XII.

THE STORY OF IMLAC CONTINUED.

"I AM not yet willing, said the prince, to suppose that happiness is so parsimoniously distributed to mortals; nor can believe but that, if I had the choice of life, I should be able to fill every day with pleasure. I would injure no man, and should provoke no resentment: I would relieve every distress, and should enjoy the benedictions of gratitude. I would chuse my friends among the wise, and my wife among the virtuous; and therefore should be in no danger from treachery or unkindness. My children should, by my care, be

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learned and pious, and would repay to my age what their childhood had received. What would dare to moleſt him who might call on every ſide to thouſands enriched by his bounty, or aſſiſted by his power? And why ſhould not life glide quietly away in the ſoft reciprocation of protection and reverence? All this may be done without the help of European refinements, which appear by their effects to be rather ſpecious than uſeful. Let us leave them, and purſue our journey."

"From Paleſtine, ſaid Imlac, I paſſed through many regions of Aſia; in the more civilized kingdoms as a trader, and among the barbarians of the mountains as a pilgrim. At laſt I began to long for my native country, that I might repoſe after my travels and fatigues, in the places where I had ſpent my earlieſt years, and gladden my old companions with the recital of my adventures. Often did I figure to myſelf thoſe with whom I had ſported away the gay hours of dawning life, ſitting round me in its evening, wondering at my tales, and liſtening to my counſels.

"When this thought had taken poſſeſſion of my mind, I conſidered every moment as waſted which did not bring me nearer to Abiſſinia. I haſtened into Egypt, and notwithſtanding my impatience, was detained ten months in the contemplation of its ancient magnificence, and in inquiries after the remains of its ancient learning. I found in Cairo a mixture of all nations; ſome brought thither by the love of knowledge, ſome by the hope of gain, and many by the deſire of living after their own manner without obſervation, and of lying hid in the obſcurity of multitudes:

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for in a city, populous as Cairo, it is poſſible to obtain at the ſame time the gratifications of ſociety, and the ſecrecy of ſolitude.

"From Cairo I travelled to Suez, and embarked on the Red Sea, paſſing along the coaſt till I arrived at the port from which I had departed twenty years before. Here I joined myſelf to a caravan, and re-entered my native country.

"I now expected the careſſes of my kinſmen, and the congratulations of my friends, and was not without hope that my father, whatever value he had ſet upon riches, would own with gladneſs and pride a ſon who was able to add to the felicity and honour of the nation. But I was ſoon convinced that my thoughts were vain. My father had been dead fourteen years, having divided his wealth among my brothers, who were removed to ſome other provinces. Of my companions the greater part was in the grave; of the reſt, ſome could with difficulty remember me, and ſome conſidered me as one corrupted by foreign manners.

"A man uſed to viciſſitudes is not eaſily dejected. I forgot, after a time, my diſappointment, and endeavoured to recommend myſelf to the nobles of the kingdom; they admitted me to their tables, heard my ſtory, and diſmiſſed me. I opened a ſchool, and was prohibited to teach. I then reſolved to ſit down in the quiet of domeſtick life, and addreſſed a lady that was fond of my converſation, but rejected my ſuit, becauſe my father was a merchant.

"Wearied at laſt with ſolicitation and repulſes, I reſolved to hide myſelf for ever from the world, and depend no longer on the opinion or caprice of

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others. I waited for the time when the gate of the *happy valley* ſhould open, that I might bid farewell to hope and fear: the day came; my performance was diſtinguiſhed with favour, and I reſigned myſelf with joy to perpetual confinement."

"Haſt thou here found happineſs at laſt? ſaid Raſſelas. Tell me without reſerve; art thou content with thy condition? or, doſt thou wiſh to be again wandering and inquiring? All the inhabitants of this valley celebrate their lot, and at the annual viſit of the emperour, invite others to partake of their felicity."

"Great prince, ſaid Imlac, I ſhall ſpeak the truth; I know not one of all your attendants who does not lament the hour when he entered this retreat. I am leſs unhappy than the reſt, becauſe I have a mind replete with images, which I can vary and combine at pleaſure. I can amuſe my ſolitude by the renovation of the knowledge which begins to fade from my memory, and by recollection of the accidents of my paſt life. Yet all this ends in the ſorrowful conſideration, that my acquirements are now uſeleſs, and that none of my pleaſures can be again enjoyed. The reſt, whoſe minds have no impreſſion but of the preſent moment, are either corroded by malignant paſſions, or ſit ſtupid in the gloom of perpetual vacancy."

"What paſſions can infeſt thoſe, ſaid the prince, who have no rivals? We are in a place where impotence precludes malice, and where all envy is repreſſed by community of enjoyments."

"There may be community, ſaid Imlac, of material poſſeſſions, but there can never be community of love or of eſteem. It muſt happen that one will

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pleaſe more than another; he that knows himſelf deſpiſed will always be envious; and ſtill more envious and malevolent, if he is condemned to live in the preſence of thoſe who deſpiſe him. The invitations, by which they allure others to a ſtate which they feel to be wretched, proceed from the natural malignity of hopeleſs miſery. They are weary of themſelves, and of each other, and expect to find relief in new companions. They envy the liberty which their folly has forfeited, and would gladly ſee all mankind impriſoned like themſelves.

"From this crime, however, I am wholly free! No man can ſay that he is wretched by my perſuaſion. I look with pity on the crowds who are annually ſoliciting admiſſion to captivity, and wiſh that it were lawful for me to warn them of their danger."

"My dear Imlac, ſaid the prince, I will open to thee my whole heart. I have long meditated an eſcape from the happy valley. I have examined the mountains on every ſide, but find myſelf inſuperably barred: teach me the way to break my priſon; thou ſhalt be the companion of my flight, the guide of my rambles, the partner of my fortune, and my ſole director in the *choice of life*."

"Sir, anſwered the poet, your eſcape will be difficult, and, perhaps, you may ſoon repent your curioſity. The world, which you figure to yourſelf, ſmooth and quiet as the lake in the valley, you will find a ſea foaming with tempeſts, and boiling with whirlpools: you will be ſometimes overwhelmed by the waves of violence, and ſometimes daſhed againſt

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the rocks of treachery. Amidſt wrongs and frauds, competitions and anxieties, you will wiſh a thouſand times for theſe ſeats of quiet, and willingly quit hope to be free from fear."

"Do not ſeek to deter me from my purpoſe, ſaid the prince: I am impatient to ſee what thou haſt ſeen; and, ſince thou art thyſelf weary of the valley, it is evident, that thy former ſtate was better than this. Whatever be the conſequence of my experiment, I am reſolved to judge, with mine own eyes, of the various conditions of men, and then to make deliberately my *choice of life*."

"I am afraid, ſaid Imlac, you are hindered by ſtronger reſtraints than my perſuaſions; yet, if your determination is fixed, I do not counſel you to deſpair. Few things are impoſſible to diligence and ſkill."

CHAP. XIII.

RASSELAS DISCOVERS THE MEANS OF ESCAPE.

THE prince now diſmiſſed his favourite to reſt, but the narrative of wonders and novelties filled his mind with perturbation. He revolved all that he had heard, and prepared innumerable queſtions for the morning.

Much of his uneaſineſs was now removed. He had a friend to whom he could impart his thoughts, and whoſe experience could aſſiſt him in his deſigns. His heart was no longer condemned to ſwell with ſilent vexation. He thought that even the *happy valley* might be endured with ſuch a companion, and that if

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if they could range the world together, he ſhould have nothing further to deſire.

In a few days the water was diſcharged, and the ground dried. The prince and Imlac then walked out together to converſe without the notice of the reſt. The prince, whoſe thoughts were always on the wing, as he paſſed by the gate, ſaid, with a countenance of ſorrow, "Why art thou ſo ſtrong, and why is man ſo weak?"

"Man is not weak, anſwered his companion; knowledge is more than equivalent to force. The maſter of mechanicks laughs at ſtrength. I can burſt the gate but cannot do it ſecretly. Some other expedient muſt be tried."

As they were walking on the ſide of the mountain, they obſerved that the conies, which the rain had driven from their burrows, had taken ſhelter among the buſhes, and formed holes behind them, tending upwards in an oblique line. "It has been the opinion of antiquity, ſaid Imlac, that human reaſon borrowed many arts from the inſtinct of animals; let us, therefore, not think ourſelves degraded by learning from the coney. We may eſcape by piercing the mountain in the ſame direction. We will begin where the ſummit hangs over the middle part, and labour upward till we ſhall iſſue up beyond the prominence."

The eyes of the prince, when he heard this propoſal, ſparkled with joy. The execution was eaſy, and the ſucceſs certain.

No time was now loſt. They haſtened early in the morning to chuſe a place proper for their mine. They clambered with great fatigue among crags and

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brambles, and returned without having diſcovered any part that favoured their deſign. The ſecond and the third day were ſpent in the ſame manner and with the ſame fruſtration. But, on the fourth, they found a ſmall cavern, concealed by a thicket, where they reſolved to make their experiment.

Imlac procured inſtruments proper to hew ſtone and remove earth, and they fell to their work on the next day with more eagerneſs than vigour. They were preſently exhauſted by their efforts, and ſat down to pant upon the graſs. The prince, for a moment, appeared to be diſcouraged. "Sir, ſaid his companion, practice will enable us to continue our labour for a longer time; mark, however, how far we have advanced, and you will find that our toil will ſome time have an end. Great works are performed, not by ſtrength, but perſeverance: yonder palace was raiſed by ſingle ſtones, yet you ſee its height and ſpaciouſneſs. He that ſhall walk with vigour three hours a day, will paſs in ſeven years a ſpace equal to the circumference of the globe."

They returned to their work day after day, and, in a ſhort time, found a fiſſure in the rock, which enabled them to paſs far with very little obſtruction. This Raſſelas conſidered as a good omen. "Do not diſturb your mind, ſaid Imlac, with other hopes or fears than reaſon may ſuggeſt; if you are pleaſed with prognoſticks of good, you will be terrified likewiſe with tokens of evil, and your whole life will be a prey to ſuperſtition. Whatever facilitates our work is more than an omen, it is a cauſe of ſucceſs. This is one of thoſe pleaſing ſurpriſes which often happen

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to active resolution. Many things difficult to design prove easy to performance."

CHAP. XIV.

RASSELAS AND IMLAC RECEIVE AN UNEXPECTED VISIT.

They had now wrought their way to the middle, and solaced their toil with the approach of liberty, when the prince, coming down to refresh himself with air, found his sister Nekayah standing before the mouth of the cavity. He started and stood confused, afraid to tell his design, and yet hopeless to conceal it. A few moments determined him to repose on her fidelity, and secure her secrecy by a declaration without reserve.

"Do not imagine, said the princess, that I came hither as a spy: I had long observed from my window, that you and Imlac directed your walk every day towards the same point, but I did not suppose you had any better reason for the preference than a cooler shade, or more fragrant bank; nor followed you with any other design than to partake of your conversation. Since then not suspicion but fondness has detected you, let me not lose the advantage of my discovery. I am equally weary of confinement with yourself, and not less desirous of knowing what is done or suffered in the world. Permit me to fly with you from this tasteless tranquillity, which will yet grow more loathsome when you have left me. You may deny me to accompany you, but cannot hinder me from following."

The prince, who loved Nekayah above his other sisters, had no inclination to refuse her request, and grieved

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grieved that he had loſt an opportunity of ſhewing his confidence by a voluntary communication. It was therefore agreed that ſhe ſhould leave the valley with them; and that, in the mean time, ſhe ſhould watch, leſt any other ſtraggler ſhould, by chance or curioſity, follow them to the mountain.

At length their labour was at an end; they ſaw light beyond the prominence, and, iſſuing to the top of the mountain, beheld the Nile, yet a narrow current, wandering beneath them.

The prince looked round with rapture, anticipated all the pleaſures of travel, and in thought was already tranſported beyond his father's dominions. Imlac, though very joyful at his eſcape, had leſs expectation of pleaſure in the world, which he had before tried, and of which he had been weary.

Raſſelas was ſo much delighted with a wider horizon, that he could not ſoon be perſuaded to return into the valley. He informed his ſiſter that the way was open, and that nothing now remained but to prepare for their departure.

CHAP. XV.

THE PRINCE AND PRINCESS LEAVE THE VALLEY, AND SEE MANY WONDERS.

The prince and princeſs had jewels ſufficient to make them rich whenever they came into a place of commerce, which, by Imlac's direction, they hid in their clothes, and, on the night of the next full moon, all left the valley. The princeſs was followed only by a ſingle

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ſingle favourite, who did not know whither ſhe was going.

They clambered through the cavity, and began to go down on the other ſide. The princeſs and her maid turned their eyes towards every part, and, ſeeing nothing to bound their proſpect, conſidered themſelves as in danger of being loſt in a dreary vacuity. They ſtopped and trembled. "I am almoſt afraid, ſaid the princeſs, to begin a journey of which I cannot perceive an end, and to venture into this immenſe plain, where I may be approached on every ſide by men whom I never ſaw." The prince felt nearly the ſame emotions, though he thought it more manly to conceal them.

Imlac ſmiled at their terrours, and encouraged them to proceed; but the princeſs continued irreſolute till ſhe had been imperceptibly drawn forward too far to return.

In the morning they found ſome ſhepherds in the field, who ſet milk and fruits before them. The princeſs wondered that ſhe did not ſee a palace ready for her reception, and a table ſpread with delicacies; but being faint and hungry, ſhe drank the milk and eat the fruits, and thought them of a higher flavour than the produce of the valley.

They travelled forward by eaſy journies, being all unaccuſtomed to toil or difficulty, and knowing, that though they might be miſſed, they could not be purſued. In a few days they came into a more populous region, where Imlac was diverted with the admiration which his companions expreſſed at the diverſity of manners, ſtations, and employments.

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Their dreſs was ſuch as might not bring upon them the ſuſpicion of having any thing to conceal, yet the prince, wherever he came, expected to be obeyed, and the princeſs was frightened, becauſe thoſe that came into her preſence did not proſtrate themſelves before her. Imlac was forced to obſerve them with great vigilance, leſt they ſhould betray their rank by their unuſual behaviour, and detained them ſeveral weeks in the firſt village, to accuſtom them to the ſight of common mortals.

By degrees the royal wanderers were taught to underſtand that they had for a time laid aſide their dignity, and were to expect only ſuch regard as liberality and courteſy could procure. And Imlac having, by many admonitions, prepared them to endure the tumults of a port, and the ruggedneſs of the commercial race, brought them down to the ſea-coaſt.

The prince and his ſiſter, to whom every thing was new, were gratified equally at all places, and therefore remained for ſome months at the port without any inclination to paſs further. Imlac was content with their ſtay, becauſe he did not think it ſafe to expoſe them, unpractiſed in the world, to the hazards of a foreign country.

At laſt he began to fear leſt they ſhould be diſcovered, and propoſed to fix a day for their departure. They had no pretenſions to judge for themſelves, and referred the whole ſcheme to his direction. He therefore took paſſage in a ſhip to Suez; and, when the time came, with great difficulty prevailed on the princeſs to enter the veſſel. They had a quick and proſperous voyage, and from Suez travelled by land to Cairo.

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CHAP. XVI.

THEY ENTER CAIRO, AND FIND EVERY MAN HAPPY.

As they approached the city, which filled the ſtrangers with aſtoniſhment, "This, ſaid Imlac to the prince, is the place where travellers and merchants aſſemble from all the corners of the earth. You will here find men of every character, and every occupation. Commerce is here honourable: I will act as a merchant, and you ſhall live as ſtrangers, who have no other end of travel than curioſity; it will ſoon be obſerved that we are rich; our reputation will procure us acceſs to all whom we ſhall deſire to know; you will ſee all the conditions of humanity, and enable yourſelf at leiſure to make your *choice of life.*"

They now entered the town, ſtunned by the noiſe, and offended by the crowds. Inſtruction had not yet ſo prevailed over habit, but that they wondered to ſee themſelves paſs undiſtinguiſhed along the ſtreet, and met by the loweſt of the people without reverence or notice. The princeſs could not at firſt bear the thought of being levelled with the vulgar, and, for ſome days, continued in her chamber, where ſhe was ſerved by her favourite Pekuah as in the palace of the valley.

Imlac, who underſtood traffick, ſold part of the jewels the next day, and hired a houſe, which he adorned with ſuch magnificence, that he was immediately conſidered as a merchant of great wealth. His politeneſs attracted many acquaintance, and his generoſity

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nerosity made him courted by many dependants. His table was crowded by men of every nation, who all admired his knowledge, and solicited his favour. His companions, not being able to mix in the conversation, could make no discovery of their ignorance or surprise, and were gradually initiated in the world as they gained knowledge of the language.

The prince had, by frequent lectures, been taught the use and nature of money; but the ladies could not, for a long time, comprehend what the merchants did with small pieces of gold and silver, or why things of so little use should be received as equivalent to the necessaries of life.

They studied the language two years, while Imlac was preparing to set before them the various ranks and conditions of mankind. He grew acquainted with all who had any thing uncommon in their fortune or conduct. He frequented the voluptuous and the frugal, the idle and the busy, the merchants and the men of learning.

The prince being now able to converse with fluency, and having learned the caution necessary to be observed in his intercourse with strangers, began to accompany Imlac to places of resort, and to enter into all assemblies, that he might make his *choice of life*.

For some time he thought choice needless, because all appeared to him equally happy. Wherever he went he met gaiety and kindness, and heard the song of joy or the laugh of carelessness. He began to believe that the world overflowed with universal plenty, and that nothing was withheld either from want or merit; that every hand showered liberality, and every heart melted

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melted with benevolence; "and who then, ſays he, will be ſuffered to be wretched?"

Imlac permitted the pleaſing deluſion, and was unwilling to cruſh the hope of inexperience, till one day having ſat a while ſilent, "I know not, ſaid the prince, what can be the reaſon that I am more unhappy than any of our friends. I ſee them perpetually and unalterably cheerful, but feel my own mind reſtleſs and uneaſy. I am unſatisfied with thoſe pleaſures which I ſeem moſt to court; I live in the crowds of jollity, not ſo much to enjoy company, as to ſhun myſelf, and am only loud and merry to conceal my ſadneſs."

"Every man, ſaid Imlac, may, by examining his own mind, gueſs what paſſes in the minds of others: when you feel that your own gaiety is counterfeit, it may juſtly lead you to ſuſpect that of your companions not to be ſincere. Envy is commonly reciprocal. We are long before we are convinced that happineſs is never to be found, and each believes it poſſeſſed by others, to keep alive the hope of obtaining it for himſelf. In the aſſembly, where you paſſed the laſt night, there appeared ſuch ſprightlineſs of air, and volatility of fancy, as might have ſuited beings of an higher order, formed to inhabit ſerener regions, inacceſſible to care or ſorrow: yet, believe me, prince, there was not one who did not dread the moment when ſolitude ſhould deliver him to the tyranny of reflection."

"This, ſaid the prince, may be true of others, ſince it is true of me; yet, whatever be the general infelicity of man, one condition is more happy than another,

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another, and wiſdom ſurely directs us to take the leaſt evil in the *choice of life.*"

"The cauſes of good and evil, anſwered Imlac, are ſo various and uncertain, ſo often entangled with each other, ſo diverſified by various relations, and ſo much ſubject to accidents which cannot be foreſeen, that he who would fix his condition upon inconteſtible reaſons of preference, muſt live and die inquiring and deliberating."

"But ſurely, ſaid Raſſelas, the wiſe men, to whom we liſten with reverence and wonder, choſe that mode of life for themſelves which they thought moſt likely to make them happy."

"Very few, ſaid the poet, live by choice. Every man is placed in his preſent condition by cauſes which acted without his foreſight, and with which he did not always willingly co-operate; and therefore you will rarely meet one who does not think the lot of his neighbour better than his own."

"I am pleaſed to think, ſaid the prince, that my birth has given me at leaſt one advantage over others, by enabling me to determine for myſelf. I have here the world before me; I will review it at leiſure: ſurely happineſs is ſomewhere to be found."

CHAP. XVII.

THE PRINCE ASSOCIATES WITH YOUNG MEN OF SPIRIT AND GAIETY.

RASSELAS roſe next day, and reſolved to begin his experiments upon life. "Youth, cried he, is the time of gladneſs: I will join myſelf to the young men, whoſe

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whoſe only buſineſs is to gratify their deſires, and whoſe time is all ſpent in a ſucceſſion of enjoyments."

To ſuch ſocieties he was readily admitted, but a few days brought him back weary and diſguſted. Their mirth was without images; their laughter without motive; their pleaſures were groſs and ſenſual, in which the mind had no part; their conduct was at once wild and mean; they laughed at order and at law, but the frown of power dejected, and the eye of wiſdom abaſhed them.

The prince ſoon concluded, that he ſhould never be happy in a courſe of life of which he was aſhamed. He thought it unſuitable to a reaſonable being to act without a plan, and to be ſad or cheerful only by chance. "Happineſs, ſaid he, muſt be ſomething ſolid and permanent, without fear and without uncertainty."

But his young companions had gained ſo much of his regard by their frankneſs and courteſy, that he could not leave them without warning and remonſtrance. "My friends, ſaid he, I have ſeriouſly conſidered our manners and our proſpects, and find that we have miſtaken our own intereſt. The firſt years of man muſt make proviſion for the laſt. He that never thinks never can be wiſe. Perpetual levity muſt end in ignorance; and intemperance, though it may fire the ſpirits for an hour, will make life ſhort or miſerable. Let us conſider that youth is of no long duration, and that in maturer age, when the enchantments of fancy ſhall ceaſe, and phantoms of delight dance no more about us, we ſhall have no comforts but the eſteem of wiſe men, and the means of doing good. Let us, therefore, ſtop, while to ſtop is in our power: let us

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live as men who are ſome time to grow old, and to whom it will be the moſt dreadful of all evils to count their paſt years by follies, and to be reminded of their former luxuriance of health only by the maladies which riot has produced."

They ſtared a while in ſilence one upon another, and at laſt drove him away by a general chorus of continued laughter.

The conſciouſneſs that his ſentiments were juſt, and his intentions kind, was ſcarcely ſufficient to ſupport him againſt the horrour of deriſion. But he recovered his tranquillity, and purſued his ſearch.

CHAP. XVIII.

THE PRINCE FINDS A WISE AND HAPPY MAN.

As he was one day walking in the ſtreet, he ſaw a ſpacious building which all were, by the open doors invited to enter: he followed the ſtream of people, and found it a hall or ſchool of declamation, in which profeſſors read lectures to their auditory. He fixed his eye upon a ſage raiſed above the reſt, who diſcourſed with great energy on the government of the paſſions. His look was venerable, his action graceful, his pronunciation clear, and his diction elegant. He ſhowed, with great ſtrength of ſentiment, and variety of illuſtration, that human nature is degraded and debaſed, when the lower faculties predominate over the higher; that when fancy, the parent of paſſion, uſurps the dominion of the mind, nothing enſues but the natural effect

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effect of unlawful government, perturbation and confuſion; that ſhe betrays the fortreſſes of the intellect to rebels, and excites her children to ſedition againſt reaſon, their lawful ſovereign. He compared reaſon to the ſun, of which the light is conſtant, uniform, and laſting; and fancy to a meteor, of bright but tranſitory luſtre, irregular in its motion, and deluſive in its direction.

He then communicated the various precepts given from time to time for the conqueſt of paſſion, and diſplayed the happineſs of thoſe who had obtained the important victory, after which man is no longer the ſlave of fear, nor the fool of hope; is no more emaciated by envy, inflamed by anger, emaſculated by tenderneſs, or depreſſed by grief; but walks on calmly through the tumults or privacies of life, as the ſun purſues alike his courſe through the calm or the ſtormy ſky.

He enumerated many examples of heroes immovable by pain or pleaſure, who looked with indifference on thoſe modes or accidents to which the vulgar give the names of good and evil. He exhorted his hearers to lay aſide their prejudices, and arm themſelves againſt the ſhafts of malice or misfortune, by invulnerable patience, concluding, that this ſtate only was happineſs, and that this happineſs was in every one's power.

Raſſelas liſtened to him with the veneration due to the inſtructions of a ſuperior being, and, waiting for him at the door, humbly implored the liberty of viſiting ſo great a maſter of true wiſdom. The lecturer heſitated a moment, when Raſſelas put a

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purſe of gold into his hand, which he received with a mixture of joy and wonder.

"I have found, ſaid the prince, at his return to Imlac, a man who can teach all that is neceſſary to be known, who, from the unſhaken throne of rational fortitude, looks down on the ſcenes of life changing beneath him. He ſpeaks, and attention watches his lips. He reaſons, and conviction cloſes his periods. This man ſhall be my future guide: I will learn his doctrines, and imitate his life."

"Be not too haſty, ſaid Imlac, to truſt, or to admire the teachers of morality: they diſcourſe like angels, but they live like men."

Raſſelas, who could not conceive how any man could reaſon ſo forcibly without feeling the cogency of his own arguments, paid his viſit in a few days, and was denied admiſſion. He had now learned the power of money, and made his way by a piece of gold to the inner apartment, where he found the philoſopher in a room half darkened, with his eyes miſty, and his face pale. "Sir, ſaid he, you are come at a time when all human friendſhip is uſeleſs; what I ſuffer cannot be remedied, what I have loſt cannot be ſupplied. My daughter, my only daughter, from whoſe tenderneſs I expected all the comforts of my age, died laſt night of a fever. My views, my purpoſes, my hopes are at an end: I am now a lonely being diſunited from ſociety."

"Sir, ſaid the prince, mortality is an event by which a wiſe man can never be ſurpriſed: we know that death is always near, and it ſhould therefore always be expected." "Young man, anſwered the philoſopher,

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philoſopher, you ſpeak like one that has never felt the pangs of ſeparation." "Have you then forgot the precepts, ſaid Raſſelas, which you ſo powerfully enforced? Has wiſdom no ſtrength to arm the heart againſt calamity? Conſider, that external things are naturally variable, but truth and reaſon are always the ſame." "What comfort, ſaid the mourner, can truth and reaſon afford me? of what effect are they now, but to tell me, that my daughter will not be reſtored?"

The prince, whoſe humanity would not ſuffer him to inſult miſery with reproof, went away convinced of the emptineſs of rhetorical ſound, and the inefficacy of poliſhed periods and ſtudied ſentences.

CHAP. XIX.

A GLIMPSE OF PASTORAL LIFE.

He was ſtill eager upon the ſame inquiry: and having heard of a hermit, that lived near the loweſt cataract of the Nile, and filled the whole country with the fame of his ſanctity, reſolved to viſit his retreat, and inquire whether that felicity which publick life could not afford, was to be found in ſolitude; and whether a man whoſe age and virtue made him venerable, could teach any peculiar art of ſhunning evils, or enduring them?

Imlac and the princeſs agreed to accompany him, and, after the neceſſary preparations, they began their journey. Their way lay through the fields, where ſhepherds tended their flocks, and the lambs were playing upon the paſture. "This, ſaid the poet, is the life which has been often celebrated for its inno-

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cence and quiet; let us paſs the heat of the day among the ſhepherds tents, and know whether all our ſearches are not to terminate in paſtoral ſimplicity."

The propoſal pleaſed them, and they induced the ſhepherds, by ſmall preſents and familiar queſtions, to tell their opinion of their own ſtate; they were ſo rude and ignorant, ſo little able to compare the good with the evil of the occupation, and ſo indiſtinct in their narratives and deſcriptions, that very little could be learned from them. But it was evident that their hearts were cankered with diſcontent; that they conſidered themſelves as condemned to labour for the luxury of the rich, and looked up with ſtupid malevolence toward thoſe that were placed above them.

The princeſs pronounced with vehemence, that ſhe would never ſuffer theſe envious ſavages to be her companions, and that ſhe ſhould not ſoon be deſirous of ſeeing any more ſpecimens of ruſtick happineſs; but could not believe that all the accounts of primeval pleaſures were fabulous; and was yet in doubt, whether life had any thing that could be juſtly preferred to the placid gratifications of fields and woods. She hoped that the time would come, when, with a few virtuous and elegant companions, ſhe ſhould gather flowers planted by her own hand, fondle the lambs of her own ewe, and liſten, without care, among brooks and breezes, to one of her maidens reading in the ſhade.

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CHAP XX.

THE DANGER OF PROSPERITY.

On the next day they continued their journey, till the heat compelled them to look round for ſhelter. At a ſmall diſtance they ſaw a thick wood, which they no ſooner entered than they perceived that they were approaching the habitations of men. The ſhrubs were diligently cut away to open walks where the ſhades were darkeſt; the boughs of oppoſite trees were artificially interwoven; ſeats of flowery turf were raiſed in vacant ſpaces, and a rivulet, that wantoned along the ſide of a winding path, had its banks ſometimes opened into ſmall baſins, and its ſtreams ſometimes obſtructed by little mounds of ſtone, heaped together to increaſe its murmurs.

They paſſed ſlowly through the wood, delighted with ſuch unexpected accommodations, and entertained each other with conjecturing what, or who, he could be, that, in thoſe rude and unfrequented regions, had leiſure and art for ſuch harmleſs luxury.

As they advanced they heard the ſound of muſick, and ſaw youths and virgins dancing in the grove; and, going ſtill further, beheld a ſtately palace built upon a hill ſurrounded with woods. The laws of eaſtern hoſpitality allowed them to enter, and the maſter welcomed them like a man liberal and wealthy.

He was ſkilful enough in appearances ſoon to diſcern that they were no common gueſts, and ſpread his table with magnificence. The eloquence of Imlac

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caught his attention, and the lofty courteſy of the princeſs excited his reſpect. When they offered to depart he entreated their ſtay, and was the next day ſtill more unwilling to diſmiſs them than before. They were eaſily perſuaded to ſtop, and civility grew up in time to freedom and confidence.

The prince now ſaw all the domeſticks cheerful, and all the face of nature ſmiling round the place, and could not forbear to hope that he ſhould find here what he was ſeeking; but when he was congratulating the maſter upon his poſſeſſions, he anſwered with a ſigh, "My condition has indeed the appearance of happineſs, but appearances are deluſive. My proſperity puts my life in danger; the Baſſa of Egypt is my enemy, incenſed only by my wealth and popularity. I have been hitherto protected againſt him by the princes of the country; but, as the favour of the great is uncertain, I know not how ſoon my defenders may be perſuaded to ſhare the plunder with the Baſſa. I have ſent my treaſures into a diſtant country, and, upon the firſt alarm, am prepared to follow them. Then will my enemies riot in my manſion, and enjoy the gardens which I have planted."

They all joined in lamenting his danger, and deprecating his exile: and the princeſs was ſo much diſturbed with the tumult of grief and indignation, that ſhe retired to her apartment. They continued with their kind inviter a few days longer, and then went forward to find the hermit.

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CHAP. XXI.

THE HAPPINESS OF SOLITUDE. THE HERMIT'S HISTORY.

THEY came on the third day, by the direction of the peaſants, to the hermit's cell: it was a cavern in the ſide of a mountain, over-ſhadowed with palm-trees; at ſuch a diſtance from the cataract, that nothing more was heard than a gentle uniform murmur, ſuch as compoſed the mind to penſive meditation, eſpecially when it was aſſiſted by the wind whiſtling among the branches. The firſt rude eſſay of nature had been ſo much improved by human labour, that the cave contained ſeveral apartments appropriated to different uſes, and often afforded lodging to travellers, whom darkneſs or tempeſts happened to overtake.

The hermit ſat on a bench at the door, to enjoy the coolneſs of the evening. On one ſide lay a book with pens and papers, on the other mechanical inſtruments of various kinds. As they approached him unregarded, the princeſs obſerved that he had not the countenance of a man that had found, or could teach the way to happineſs.

They ſaluted him with great reſpect, which he repaid like a man not unaccuſtomed to the forms of courts. "My children, ſaid he, if you have loſt your way, you ſhall be willingly ſupplied with ſuch conveniencies for the night as this cavern will afford. I have all that nature requires, and you will not expect delicacies in a hermit's cell."

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They thanked him, and, entering, were pleaſed with the neatneſs and regularity of the place. The hermit ſet fleſh and wine before them, though he fed only upon fruits and water. His diſcourſe was cheerful without levity, and pious without enthuſiaſm. He ſoon gained the eſteem of his gueſts, and the princeſs repented of her haſty cenſure.

At laſt Imlac began thus: "I do not now wonder that your reputation is ſo far extended; we have heard at Cairo of your wiſdom, and came hither to implore your direction for this young man and maiden in the *choice of life*."

"To him that lives well, anſwered the hermit, every form of life is good; nor can I give any other rule for choice, than to remove from all apparent evil."

"He will remove moſt certainly from evil, ſaid the prince, who ſhall devote himſelf to that ſolitude which you have recommended by your example."

"I have indeed lived fifteen years in ſolitude, ſaid the hermit, but have no deſire that my example ſhould gain any imitators. In my youth I profeſſed arms, and was raiſed by degrees to the higheſt military rank. I have traverſed wide countries at the head of my troops, and ſeen many battles and ſieges. At laſt, being diſguſted by the preferments of a younger officer, and feeling that my vigour was beginning to decay, I was reſolved to cloſe my life in peace, having found the world full of ſnares, diſcord, and miſery. I had once eſcaped from the purſuit of the enemy by the ſhelter of this cavern, and therefore choſe it for my final reſidence. I employed artificers to form it into chambers, and ſtored it with all that I was likely to want.

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"For ſome time after my retreat, I rejoiced like a tempeſt-beaten ſailor at his entrance into the harbour, being delighted with the ſudden change of the noiſe and hurry of war to ſtillneſs and repoſe. When the pleaſure of novelty went away, I employed my hours in examining the plants which grow in the valley, and the minerals which I collected from the rocks. But that inquiry is now grown taſteleſs and irkſome. I have been for ſome time unſettled and diſtracted: my mind is diſturbed with a thouſand perplexities of doubt, and vanities of imagination, which hourly prevail upon me becauſe I have no opportunities of relaxation or diverſion. I am ſometimes aſhamed to think that I could not ſecure myſelf from vice, but by retiring from the exerciſe of virtue, and begin to ſuſpect that I was rather impelled by reſentment, than led by devotion, into ſolitude. My fancy riots in ſcenes of folly, and I lament that I have loſt ſo much, and have gained ſo little. In ſolitude, if I eſcape the example of bad men, I want likewiſe the counſel and converſation of the good. I have been long comparing the evils with the advantages of ſociety, and reſolve to return into the world to-morrow. The life of a ſolitary man will be certainly miſerable, but not certainly devout."

They heard his reſolution with ſurpriſe, but after a ſhort pauſe, offered to conduct him to Cairo. He dug up a conſiderable treaſure which he had hid among the rocks, and accompanied them to the city, on which, as he approached it, he gazed with rapture.

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CHAP. XXII.

THE HAPPINESS OF A LIFE LED ACCORDING TO NATURE.

RASSELAS went often to an assembly of learned men, who met at stated times to unbend their minds, and compare their opinions. Their manners were somewhat coarse, but their conversation was instructive, and their disputations acute, though sometimes too violent, and often continued till neither controvertist remembered upon what question they began. Some faults were almost general among them: every one was desirous to dictate to the rest, and every one was pleased to hear the genius or knowledge of another depreciated.

In this assembly Rasselas was relating his interview with the hermit, and the wonder with which he heard him censure a course of life which he had so deliberately chosen, and so laudably followed. The sentiments of the hearers were various. Some were of opinion, that the folly of his choice had been justly punished by condemnation to perpetual perseverance. One of the youngest among them, with great vehemence, pronounced him an hypocrite. Some talked of the right of society to the labour of individuals, and considered retirement as a desertion of duty. Others readily allowed, that there was a time when the claims of the publick were satisfied, and when a man might properly sequester himself, to review his life, and purify his heart.

One, who appeared more affected with the narrative than the rest, thought it likely, that the hermit would,

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would, in a few years, go back to his retreat, and, perhaps, if ſhame did not reſtrain, or death intercept him, return once more from his retreat into the world: "For the hope of happineſs, ſaid he, is ſo ſtrongly impreſſed, that the longeſt experience is not able to efface it. Of the preſent ſtate, whatever it be, we feel, and are forced to confeſs, the miſery; yet, when the ſame ſtate is again at a diſtance, imagination paints it as deſirable. But the time will ſurely come, when deſire will be no longer our torment, and no man ſhall be wretched but by his own fault."

"This, ſaid a philoſopher, who had heard him with tokens of great impatience, is the preſent condition of a wiſe man. The time is already come, when none are wretched but by their own fault. Nothing is more idle, than to inquire after happineſs, which nature has kindly placed within our reach. The way to be happy is to live according to nature, in obedience to that univerſal and unalterable law with which every heart is originally impreſſed; which is not written on it by precept, but engraven by deſtiny, not inſtilled by education, but infuſed at our nativity. He that lives according to nature will ſuffer nothing from the deluſions of hope, or importunities of deſire: he will receive and reject with equability of temper; and act or ſuffer as the reaſon of things ſhall alternately preſcribe. Other men may amuſe themſelves with ſubtle definitions, or intricate ratiocinations. Let them learn to be wiſe by eaſier means: let them obſerve the hind of the foreſt, and the linnet of the grove: let them conſider the life of animals, whoſe motions are regulated by inſtinct; they obey their guide and are happy.

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happy. Let us therefore, at length, ceaſe to diſpute, and learn to live; throw away the incumbrance of precepts, which they who utter them with ſo much pride and pomp do not underſtand, and carry with us this ſimple and intelligible maxim, That deviation from nature is deviation from happineſs."

When he had ſpoken, he looked round him with a placid air, and enjoyed the conſciouſneſs of his own beneficence. "Sir, ſaid the prince, with great modeſty, as I, like all the reſt of mankind, am deſirous of felicity, my cloſeſt attention has been fixed upon your diſcourſe: I doubt not the truth of a poſition which a man ſo learned has ſo confidently advanced. Let me only know what it is to live according to nature."

"When I find young men ſo humble and ſo docile, ſaid the philoſopher, I can deny them no information which my ſtudies have enabled me to afford. To live according to nature, is to act always with due regard to the fitneſs ariſing from the relations and qualities of cauſes and effects; to concur with the great and unchangeable ſcheme of univerſal felicity; to co-operate with the general diſpoſition and tendency of the preſent ſyſtem of things."

The prince ſoon found that this was one of the ſages whom he ſhould underſtand leſs as he heard him longer. He therefore bowed and was ſilent, and the philoſopher, ſuppoſing him ſatisfied, and the reſt vanquiſhed, roſe up and departed with the air of a man that had co-operated with the preſent ſyſtem.

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CHAP. XXIII.

THE PRINCE AND HIS SISTER DIVIDE BETWEEN THEM THE WORK OF OBSERVATION.

RASSELAS returned home full of reflections, doubtful how to direct his future steps. Of the way to happiness he found the learned and simple equally ignorant; but, as he was yet young, he flattered himself that he had time remaining for more experiments, and further inquiries. He communicated to Imlac his observations and his doubts, but was answered by him with new doubts, and remarks that gave him no comfort. He therefore discoursed more frequently and freely with his sister, who had yet the same hope with himself, and always assisted him to give some reason why, though he had been hitherto frustrated, he might succeed at last.

"We have hitherto, said she, known but little of the world: we have never yet been either great or mean. In our own country, though we had royalty, we had no power, and in this we have not yet seen the private recesses of domestick peace. Imlac favours not our search, lest we should in time find him mistaken. We will divide the task between us: you shall try what is to be found in the splendour of courts, and I will range the shades of humbler life. Perhaps command and authority may be the supreme blessings, as they afford most opportunities of doing good: or, perhaps, what this world can give may be found in the modest habitations of middle fortune; too low for great designs, and too high for penury and distress."

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CHAP. XXIV.

THE PRINCE EXAMINES THE HAPPINESS OF HIGH STATIONS.

RASSELAS applauded the deſign, and appeared next day with a ſplendid retinue at the court of the Baſſa. He was ſoon diſtinguiſhed for his magnificence, and admitted, as a prince whoſe curioſity had brought him from diſtant countries, to an intimacy with the great officers, and frequent converſation with the Baſſa himſelf.

He was at firſt inclined to believe, that the man muſt be pleaſed with his own condition, whom all approached with reverence, and heard with obedience, and who had the power to extend his edicts to a whole kingdom. "There can be no pleaſure, ſaid he, equal to that of feeling at once the joy of thouſands all made happy by wiſe adminiſtration. Yet, ſince by the law of ſubordination, this ſublime delight can be in one nation but the lot of one, it is ſurely reaſonable to think, that there is ſome ſatisfaction more popular and acceſſible, and that millions can hardly be ſubjected to the will of a ſingle man, only to fill his particular breaſt with incommunicable content."

Theſe thoughts were often in his mind, and he found no ſolution of the difficulty. But as preſents and civilities gained him more familiarity, he found that almoſt every man who ſtood high in employment hated all the reſt, and was hated by them, and that their lives were a continual ſucceſſion of plots and detections, ſtratagems and eſcapes, faction and treachery. Many of

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thoſe who ſurrounded the Baſſa, were ſent only to watch and report his conduct; every tongue was muttering cenſure, and every eye was ſearching for a fault.

At laſt the letters of revocation arrived, the Baſſa was carried in chains to Conſtantinople, and his name was mentioned no more.

"What are we now to think of the prerogatives of power, ſaid Raſſelas to his ſiſter; is it without any efficacy to good? or, is the ſubordinate degree only dangerous, and the ſupreme ſafe and glorious? Is the Sultan the only happy man in his dominions? or, is the Sultan himſelf ſubject to the torments of ſuſpicion, and the dread of enemies?"

In a ſhort time the ſecond Baſſa was depoſed. The Sultan, that had advanced him, was murdered by the Janiſaries, and his ſucceſſor had other views and different favourites.

CHAP. XXV.

THE PRINCESS PURSUES HER INQUIRY WITH MORE DILIGENCE THAN SUCCESS.

THE princeſs, in the mean time, inſinuated herſelf into many families; for there are few doors, through which liberality, joined with good-humour, cannot find its way. The daughters of many houſes were airy and cheerful, but Nekayah had been too long accuſtomed to the converſation of Imlac and her brother to be much pleaſed with childiſh levity, and prattle which had no meaning. She found their thoughts narrow, their

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wiſhes low, and their merriment often artificial. Their pleaſures, poor as they were, could not be preſerved pure, but were embittered by petty competitions and worthleſs emulation. They were always jealous of the beauty of each other; of a quality to which ſolicitude can add nothing, and from which detraction can take nothing away. Many were in love with triflers like themſelves, and many fancied that they were in love when in truth they were only idle. Their affection was not fixed on ſenſe or virtue, and therefore ſeldom ended but in vexation. Their grief, however, like their joy, was tranſient; every thing floated in their mind unconnected with the paſt or future, ſo that one deſire eaſily gave way to another, as a ſecond ſtone caſt into the water effaces and confounds the circles of the firſt.

With theſe girls ſhe played as with inoffenſive animals, and found them proud of her countenance, and weary of her company.

But her purpoſe was to examine more deeply, and her affability eaſily perſuaded the hearts that were ſwelling with ſorrow, to diſcharge their ſecrets in her ear: and thoſe whom hope flattered, or proſperity delighted, often courted her to partake their pleaſures.

The princeſs and her brother commonly met in the evening in a private ſummer-houſe on the bank of the Nile, and related to each other the occurrences of the day. As they were ſitting together, the princeſs caſt her eyes upon the river that flowed before her. "Anſwer, ſaid ſhe, great father of waters, thou that rolleſt thy floods through eighty nations, to the invocations of the daughter of thy native king. Tell me if thou watereſt, through all thy courſe, a ſingle habitation

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tation from which thou doſt not hear the murmurs of complaint?"

"You are then, ſaid Raſſelas, not more ſucceſsful in private houſes than I have been in courts." "I have, ſince the laſt partition of our provinces, ſaid the princeſs, enabled myſelf to enter familiarly into many families, where there was the faireſt ſhew of proſperity and peace, and know not one houſe that is not haunted by ſome fury that deſtroys their quiet.

"I did not ſeek eaſe among the poor becauſe I concluded that there it could not be found. But I ſaw many poor whom I had ſuppoſed to live in affluence. Poverty has, in large cities, very different appearances: it is often concealed in ſplendour, and often in extravagance. It is the care of a very great part of mankind to conceal their indigence from the reſt: they ſupport themſelves by temporary expedients, and every day is loſt in contriving for the morrow.

"This, however, was an evil, which, though frequent, I ſaw with leſs pain, becauſe I could relieve it. Yet ſome have refuſed my bounties; more offended with my quickneſs to detect their wants, than pleaſed with my readineſs to ſuccour them: and others, whoſe exigencies compelled them to admit my kindneſs, have never been able to forgive their benefactreſs. Many, however, have been ſincerely grateful, without the oſtentation of gratitude, or the hope of other favours."

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CHAP. XXVI.

THE PRINCESS CONTINUES HER REMARKS UPON PRIVATE LIFE.

NEKAYAH perceiving her brother's attention fixed, proceeded in her narrative.

"In families, where there is or is not poverty, there is commonly diſcord: if a kingdom be, as Imlac tells us, a great family, a family likewiſe is a little kingdom, torn with factions, and expoſed to revolutions. An unpractiſed obſerver expects the love of parents and children to be conſtant and equal; but this kindneſs ſeldom continues beyond the years of infancy: in a ſhort time the children become rivals to their parents. Benefits are allayed by reproaches, and gratitude debaſed by envy.

"Parents and children ſeldom act in concert: each child endeavours to appropriate the eſteem or fondneſs of the parents, and the parents, with yet leſs temptation, betray each other to their children; thus ſome place their confidence in the father, and ſome in the mother, and by degrees, the houſe is filled with artifices and feuds.

"The opinions of children and parents, of the young and the old, are naturally oppoſite, by the contrary effects of hope and deſpondence, of expectation and experience, without crime or folly on either ſide. The colours of life in youth and age appear different, as the face of nature in ſpring and winter. And how can children credit the aſſertions of parents, which their own eyes ſhow them to be falſe?

"Few

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"Few parents act in ſuch a manner as much to enforce their maxims by the credit of their lives. The old man truſts wholly to ſlow contrivance and gradual progreſſion: the youth expects to force his way by genius, vigour, and precipitance. The old man pays regard to riches, and the youth reverences virtue. The old man deifies prudence; the youth commits himſelf to magnanimity and chance. The young man who intends no ill, believes that none is intended, and therefore acts with openneſs and candour: but his father, having ſuffered the injuries of fraud, is impelled to ſuſpect, and too often allured to practiſe it. Age looks with anger on the temerity of youth, and youth with contempt on the ſcrupuloſity of age. Thus parents and children, for the greateſt part, live on to love leſs and leſs: and, if thoſe whom nature has thus cloſely united are the torments of each other, where ſhall we look for tenderneſs and conſolation?"

"Surely, ſaid the prince, you muſt have been unfortunate in your choice of acquaintance: I am unwilling to believe, that the moſt tender of all relations is thus impeded in its effects by natural neceſſity."

"Domeſtick diſcord, anſwered ſhe, is not inevitably and fatally neceſſary; but yet it is not eaſily avoided. We ſeldom ſee that a whole family is virtuous; the good and evil cannot well agree; and the evil can yet leſs agree with one another; even the virtuous fall ſometimes to variance, when their virtues are of different kinds, and tending to extremes. In general, thoſe parents have moſt reverence who moſt deſerve it: for he that lives well cannot be deſpiſed.

"Many other evils infeſt private life. Some are

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the ſlaves of ſervants whom they have truſted with their affairs. Some are kept in continual anxiety to the caprice of rich relations, whom they cannot pleaſe, and dare not offend. Some huſbands are imperious, and ſome wives perverſe: and, as it is always more eaſy to do evil than good, though the wiſdom or virtue of one can very rarely make many happy, the folly or vice of one may often make many miſerable."

"If ſuch be the general effect of marriage, ſaid the prince, I ſhall, for the future, think it dangerous to connect my intereſt with that of another, leſt I ſhould be unhappy by my partner's fault."

"I have met, ſaid the princeſs, with many who live ſingle for that reaſon; but I never found that their prudence ought to raiſe envy. They dream away their time without friendſhip, without fondneſs, and are driven to rid themſelves of the day, for which they have no uſe, by childiſh amuſements, or vicious delights. They act as beings under the conſtant ſenſe of ſome known inferiority, that fills their minds with rancour, and their tongues with cenſure. They are peeviſh at home, and malevolent abroad; and, as the outlaws of human nature, make it their buſineſs and their pleaſure to diſturb that ſociety which debars them from its privileges. To live without feeling or exciting ſympathy, to be fortunate without adding to the felicity of others, or afflicted without taſting the balm of pity, is a ſtate more gloomy than ſolitude: it is not retreat, but excluſion from mankind. Marriage has many pains, but celibacy has no pleaſures."

"What then is to be done? ſaid Raſſelas; the more

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more we inquire, the leſs we can reſolve. Surely he is moſt likely to pleaſe himſelf, that has no other inclination to regard."

CHAP. XXVII.

DISQUISITION UPON GREATNESS.

THE converſation had a ſhort pauſe. The prince, having conſidered his ſiſter's obſervations, told her, that ſhe had ſurveyed life with prejudice, and ſuppoſed miſery where ſhe did not find it. "Your narrative, ſays he, throws yet a darker gloom upon the proſpects of futurity: the predictions of Imlac were but faint ſketches of the evils painted by Nekayah. I have been lately convinced that quiet is not the daughter of grandeur, or of power: that her preſence is not to be bought by wealth, nor enforced by conqueſt. It is evident, that as any man acts in a wider compaſs, he muſt be more expoſed to oppoſition from enmity, or miſcarriage from chance; whoever has many to pleaſe or to govern, muſt uſe the miniſtry of many agents, ſome of whom will be wicked, and ſome ignorant; by ſome he will be miſled, and by others betrayed. If he gratifies one he will offend another: thoſe that are not favoured will think themſelves injured; and, ſince favours can be conferred but upon few, the greater number will be always diſcontented."

"The diſcontent, ſaid the princeſs which is thus unreaſonable, I hope that I ſhall always have ſpirit to deſpiſe, and you power to repreſs."

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" Diſcontent, anſwered Raſſelas, will not always be without reaſon under the moſt juſt and vigilant adminiſtration of publick affairs. None, however attentive, can always diſcover that merit which indigence or faction may happen to obſcure; and none, however powerful, can always reward it. Yet, he that ſees inferiour deſert advanced above him, will naturally impute that preference to partiality or caprice; and, indeed, it can ſcarcely be hoped that any man, however magnanimous by nature, or exalted by condition, will be able to perſiſt for ever in the fixed and inexorable juſtice of diſtribution; he will ſometimes indulge his own affections, and ſometimes thoſe of his favourites; he will permit ſome to pleaſe him who can never ſerve him; he will diſcover in thoſe whom he loves, qualities which in reality they do not poſſeſs; and to thoſe, from whom he receives pleaſure, he will in his turn endeavour to give it. Thus will recommendations ſometimes prevail which were purchaſed by money, or by the more deſtructive bribery of flattery and ſervility.

" He that has much to do will do ſomething wrong, and of that wrong muſt ſuffer the conſequences; and, if it were poſſible that he ſhould always act rightly, yet when ſuch numbers are to judge of his conduct, the bad will cenſure and obſtruct him by malevolence, and the good ſometimes by miſtake.

" The higheſt ſtations cannot therefore hope to be the abodes of happineſs, which I would willingly believe to have fled from thrones and palaces to ſeats of humble privacy and placid obſcurity. For what can

can hinder the ſatisfaction, or intercept the expectations, of him whoſe abilities are adequate to his employments, who ſees with his own eyes the whole circuit of his influence, who chooſes by his own knowledge all whom he truſts, and whom none are tempted to deceive by hope or fear? Surely he has nothing to do but to love and to be loved, to be virtuous and to be happy."

"Whether perfect happineſs would be procured by perfect goodneſs, ſaid Nekayah, this world will never afford an opportunity of deciding. But this, at leaſt, may be maintained, that we do not always find viſible happineſs in proportion to viſible virtue. All natural, and almoſt all political evils, are incident alike to the bad and good: they are confounded in the miſery of a famine, and not much diſtinguiſhed in the fury of a faction; they ſink together in a tempeſt, and are driven together from their country by invaders. All that virtue can afford is quietneſs of conſcience, a ſteady proſpect of a happier ſtate; this may enable us to endure calamity with patience; but remember that patience muſt ſuppoſe pain.

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CHAP. XXVIII.

RASSELAS AND NEKAYAH CONTINUE THEIR CONVERSATION.

"DEAR Princeſs, ſaid Raſſelas, you fall into the common errours of exaggeratory declamation, by producing, in a familiar diſquiſition, examples of national calamities, and ſcenes of extenſive miſery, which are found in books rather than in the world, and which, as they are horrid, are ordained to be rare. Let us not imagine evils which we do not feel, nor injure life by miſrepreſentations. I cannot bear that querulous eloquence which threatens every city with a ſiege like that of Jeruſalem, that makes famine attend on every flight of locuſts, and ſuſpends peſtilence on the wing of every blaſt that iſſues from the ſouth.

"On neceſſary and inevitable evils, which overwhelm kingdoms at once, all diſputation is vain: when they happen they muſt be endured. But it is evident, that theſe burſts of univerſal diſtreſs are more dreaded than felt; thouſands and ten thouſands flouriſh in youth, and wither in age, without the knowledge of any other than domeſtick evils, and ſhare the ſame pleaſures and vexations, whether their kings are mild or cruel, whether the armies of their country purſue their enemies, or retreat before them. While courts are diſturbed with inteſtine competitions, and ambaſſadors are negociating in foreign countries, the ſmith ſtill plies his anvil, and the huſbandman drives his plough forward; the neceſ-

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faries of life are required and obtained; and the ſucceſſive buſineſs of the ſeaſons continues to make its wonted revolutions.

"Let us ceaſe to conſider what, perhaps, may never happen, and what, when it ſhall happen, will laugh at human ſpeculation. We will not endeavour to modify the motions of the elements, or to fix the deſtiny of kingdoms. It is our buſineſs to conſider what beings like us may perform; each labouring for his own happineſs, by promoting within his circle, however narrow, the happineſs of others.

"Marriage is evidently the dictate of nature; men and women are made to be companions of each other, and therefore I cannot be perſuaded but that marriage is one of the means of happineſs."

"I know not, ſaid the princeſs, whether marriage be more than one of the innumerable modes of human miſery. When I ſee and reckon the various forms of connubial infelicity, the unexpected cauſes of laſting diſcord, the diverſities of temper, the oppoſitions of opinion, the rude colliſions of contrary deſire where both are urged by violent impulſes, the obſtinate conteſts of diſagreeable virtues, where both are ſupported by conſciouſneſs of good intention; I am ſometimes diſpoſed to think with the ſeverer caſuiſts of moſt nations, that marriage is rather permitted than approved, and that none, but by the inſtigation of a paſſion too much indulged, entangle themſelves with indiſſoluble compacts."

"You ſeem to forget, replied Raſſelas, that you have, even now, repreſented celibacy as leſs happy than marriage. Both conditions may be bad, but they cannot

not both be worſt. Thus it happens when wrong opinions are entertained, that they mutually deſtroy each other, and leave the mind open to truth."

"I did not expect, anſwered the princeſs, to hear that imputed to falſehood which is the conſequence only of frailty. To the mind, as to the eye, it is difficult to compare with exactneſs objects vaſt in their extent, and various in their parts. Where we ſee or conceive the whole at once, we readily note the diſcriminations, and decide the preference: but of two ſyſtems, of which neither can be ſurveyed by any human being in its full compaſs of magnitude and multiplicity of complication, where is the wonder that judging of the whole by parts, I am alternately affected by one and the other as either preſſes on my memory or fancy? We differ from ourſelves juſt as we differ from each other, when we ſee only part of the queſtion, as in the multifarious relations of politicks and morality; but when we perceive the whole at once, as in numerical computations, all agree in one judgment, and none ever varies his opinion."

"Let us not add, ſaid the prince, to the other evils of life, the bitterneſs of controverſy, nor endeavour to vie with each other in ſubtilties of argument. We are employed in a ſearch, of which both are equally to enjoy the ſucceſs, or ſuffer by the miſcarriage. It is therefore fit that we aſſiſt each other. You ſurely conclude too haſtily from the infelicity of marriage againſt its inſtitution: will not the miſery of life prove equally that life cannot be the gift of Heaven? The world muſt be peopled by marriage, or peopled without it."

"How

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"How the world is to be peopled, returned Nekayah, is not my care, and needs not be yours. I see no danger that the present generation should omit to leave successors behind them: we are not now inquiring for the world, but for ourselves."

CHAP. XXIX.

THE DEBATE ON MARRIAGE CONTINUED.

"THE good of the whole, says Rasselas, is the same with the good of all its parts. If marriage be best for mankind, it must be evidently best for individuals, or a permanent and necessary duty must be the cause of evil, and some must be inevitably sacrificed to the convenience of others. In the estimate which you have made of the two states, it appears that the incommodities of a single life are, in a great measure, necessary and certain, but those of the conjugal state accidental and avoidable.

"I cannot forbear to flatter myself, that prudence and benevolence will make marriage happy. The general folly of mankind is the cause of general complaint. What can be expected but disappointment and repentance from a choice made in the immaturity of youth, in the ardour of desire, without judgment, without foresight, without inquiry after conformity of opinions, similarity of manners, rectitude of judgment, or purity of sentiment?

"Such is the common process of marriage. A youth or maiden meeting by chance, or brought together by artifice, exchange glances, reciprocate civilities, go home, and dream of one another. Having little

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little to divert attention, or diverſify thought, they find themſelves uneaſy when they are apart, and therefore conclude that they ſhall be happy together. They marry, and diſcover what nothing but voluntary blindneſs before had concealed; they wear out life in altercations, and charge nature with cruelty.

"From thoſe early marriages proceeds likewiſe the rivalry of parents and children: the ſon is eager to enjoy the world before the father is willing to forſake it, and there is hardly room at once for two generations. The daughter begins to bloom before the mother can be content to fade, and neither can forbear to wiſh for the abſence of the other.

"Surely all theſe evils may be avoided by that deliberation and delay which prudence preſcribes to irrevocable choice. In the variety and jollity of youthful pleaſures, life may be well enough ſupported without the help of a partner. Longer time will increaſe experience, and wider views will allow better opportunities of inquiry and ſelection: one advantage, at leaſt, will be certain; the parents will be viſibly older than their children."

"What reaſon cannot collect, ſaid Nekayah, and what experiment has not yet taught, can be known only from the report of others. I have been told that late marriages are not eminently happy. This is a queſtion too important to be neglected, and I have often propoſed it to thoſe, whoſe accuracy of remark, and comprehenſiveneſs of knowledge, made their ſuffrages worthy of regard. They have generally determined, that it is dangerous for a man and woman to ſuſpend their fate upon each other, at a time when opinions

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opinions are fixed, and habits are eſtabliſhed: when friendſhips have been contracted on both ſides, when life has been planned into method, and the mind has long enjoyed the contemplation of its own proſpects.

"It is ſcarcely poſſible that two travelling through the world under the conduct of chance, ſhould have been both directed to the ſame path, and it will not often happen that either will quit the track which cuſtom has made pleaſing. When the deſultory levity of youth has ſettled into regularity, it is ſoon ſucceeded by pride aſhamed to yield, or obſtinacy delighting to contend. And even though mutual eſteem produces mutual deſire to pleaſe, time itſelf, as it modifies unchangeably the external mien, determines likewiſe the direction of the paſſions, and gives an inflexible rigidity to the manners. Long cuſtoms are not eaſily broken: he that attempts to change the courſe of his own life very often labours in vain; and how ſhall we do that for others, which we are ſeldom able to do for ourſelves?"

"But ſurely, interpoſed the prince, you ſuppoſe the chief motive of choice forgotten or neglected. Whenever I ſhall ſeek a wife, it ſhall be my firſt queſtion, whether ſhe be willing to be led by reaſon?"

"Thus it is, ſaid Nekayah, that philoſophers are deceived. There are a thouſand familiar diſputes which reaſon never can decide; queſtions that elude inveſtigation and make logick ridiculous; caſes where ſomething muſt be done, and where little can be ſaid. Conſider the ſtate of mankind, and inquire how few can be ſuppoſed to act upon any occaſions, whether ſmall or great, with all the reaſons of action preſent to their

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their minds. Wretched would be the pair above all names of wretchedneſs, who ſhould be doomed to adjuſt by reaſon, every morning, all the minute detail of a domeſtick day.

"Thoſe who marry at an advanced age, will probably eſcape the encroachments of their children; but, in diminution of this advantage, they will be likely to leave them, ignorant and helpleſs, to a guardian's mercy: or, if that ſhould not happen, they muſt at leaſt go out of the world before they ſee thoſe whom they love beſt either wiſe or great.

"From their children, if they have leſs to fear, they have leſs alſo to hope, and they loſe, without equivalent, the joys of early love, and the convenience of uniting with manners pliant, and minds ſuſceptible of new impreſſions, which might wear away their diſſimilitudes by long cohabitation, as ſoft bodies, by continual attrition, conform their ſurfaces to each other.

"I believe it will be found that thoſe who marry late are beſt pleaſed with their children, and thoſe who marry early with their partners."

"The union of theſe two affections, ſaid Raſſelas, would produce all that could be wiſhed. Perhaps there is a time when marriage might unite them, a time neither too early for the father, nor too late for the huſband."

"Every hour, anſwered the princeſs, confirms my prejudice in favour of the poſition ſo often uttered by the mouth of Imlac, 'That nature ſets her gifts on the right hand and on the left.' Thoſe conditions, which flatter hope and attract deſire, are ſo conſtituted, that as we approach one, we recede from another.

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another. There are goods ſo oppoſed that we cannot ſeize both, but, by too much prudence, may paſs between them at too great a diſtance to reach either. This is often the fate of long conſideration; he does nothing who endeavours to do more than is allowed to humanity. Flatter not yourſelf with contrarieties of pleaſure. Of the bleſſings ſet before you make your choice, and be content. No man can taſte the fruits of autumn while he is delighting his ſcent with the flowers of the ſpring: no man can, at the ſame time, fill his cup from the ſource and from the mouth of the Nile."

CHAP. XXX.

IMLAC ENTERS, AND CHANGES THE CONVERSATION.

HERE Imlac entered, and interrupted them. "Imlac, ſaid Raſſelas, I have been taking from the princeſs the diſmal hiſtory of private life, and am almoſt diſcouraged from further ſearch."

"It ſeems to me, ſaid Imlac, that while you are making the choice of life, you neglect to live. You wander about a ſingle city, which, however large and diverſified, can now afford few novelties, and forget that you are in a country, famous among the earlieſt monarchies for the power and wiſdom of its inhabitants; a country where the ſciences firſt dawned that illuminate the world, and beyond which the arts cannot be traced of civil ſociety or domeſtick life.

"The old Egyptians have left behind them mo-

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numents of industry and power, before which all European magnificence is confeſſed to fade away. The ruins of their architecture are the ſchools of modern builders; and from the wonders which time has ſpared, we may conjecture, though uncertainly, what it has deſtroyed."

"My curioſity, ſaid Raſſelas, does not very ſtrongly lead me to ſurvey piles of ſtone, or mounds of earth; my buſineſs is with man. I came hither not to meaſure fragments of temples, or trace choaked aqueducts, but to look upon the various ſcenes of the preſent world."

"The things that are now before us, ſaid the princeſs, require attention, and deſerve it. What have I to do with the heroes or the monuments of ancient times? with times which never can return, and heroes, whoſe form of life was different from all that the preſent condition of mankind requires or allows?"

"To know any thing, returned the poet, we muſt know its effects; to ſee men we muſt ſee their works, that we may learn what reaſon has dictated or paſſion has incited, and find what are the moſt powerful motives of action. To judge rightly of the preſent we muſt oppoſe it to the paſt; for all judgment is comparative, and of the future nothing can be known. The truth is, that no mind is much employed upon the preſent: recollection and anticipation fill up almoſt all our moments. Our paſſions are joy and grief, love and hatred, hope and fear. Of joy and grief the paſt is the object, and the future of hope and fear; even love and hatred reſpect the paſt, for the cauſe muſt have been before the effect.

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"The preſent ſtate of things is the conſequence of the former, and it is natural to inquire what were the ſources of the good that we enjoy, or the evil that we ſuffer. If we act only for ourſelves, to neglect the ſtudy of hiſtory is not prudent: if we are intruſted with the care of others, it is not juſt. Ignorance, when it is voluntary, is criminal; and he may properly be charged with evil, who refuſed to learn how he might prevent it.

"There is no part of hiſtory ſo generally uſeful as that which relates the progreſs of the human mind, the gradual improvement of reaſon, the ſucceſſive advances of ſcience, the viciſſitudes of learning and ignorance, which are the light and darkneſs of thinking beings, the extinction and reſuſcitation of arts, and the revolutions of the intellectual world. If accounts of battles and invaſions are peculiarly the buſineſs of princes, the uſeful or elegant arts are not to be neglected; thoſe who have kingdoms to govern, have underſtandings to cultivate.

"Example is always more efficacious than precept. A ſoldier is formed in war, and a painter muſt copy pictures. In this, contemplative life has the advantage: great actions are ſeldom ſeen, but the labours of art are always at hand for thoſe who deſire to know what art has been able to perform.

"When the eye or the imagination is ſtruck with an uncommon work, the next tranſition of an active mind is to the means by which it was performed. Here begins the true uſe of ſuch contemplation; we enlarge our comprehenſion by new ideas, and perhaps recover ſome art loſt to mankind, or learn what is leſs perfectly

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known in our own country. At leaſt we compare our own with former times, and either rejoice at our improvements, or, what is the firſt motion towards good, diſcover our defects."

"I am willing, ſaid the prince, to ſee all that can deſerve my ſearch." "And I, ſaid the princeſs, ſhall rejoice to learn ſomething of the manners of antiquity."

"The moſt pompous monument of Egyptian greatneſs, and one of the moſt bulky works of manual induſtry, ſaid Imlac, are the pyramids; fabricks raiſed before the time of hiſtory, and of which the earlieſt narratives afford us only uncertain traditions. Of theſe, the greateſt is ſtill ſtanding very little injured by time."

"Let us viſit them to-morrow, ſaid Nekayah. I have often heard of the pyramids, and ſhall not reſt till I have ſeen them within and without with my own eyes."

CHAP. XXX.

THEY VISIT THE PYRAMIDS.

THE reſolution being thus taken, they ſet out the next day. They laid tents upon their camels, being reſolved to ſtay among the pyramids till their curioſity was fully ſatisfied. They travelled gently, turned aſide to every thing remarkable, ſtopped from time to time and converſed with the inhabitants, and obſerved the various appearances of towns ruined and inhabited, of wild and cultivated nature.

When they came to the great pyramid, they were aſtoniſhed

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aſtoniſhed at the extent of the baſe, and the height of the top. Imlac explained to them the principles upon which the pyramidal form was choſen for a fabrick, intended to co-extend its duration with that of the world: he ſhewed that its gradual diminution gave it ſuch ſtability, as defeated all the common attacks of the elements, and could ſcarcely be overthrown by earthquakes themſelves, the leaſt reſiſtible of natural violence. A concuſſion that ſhould ſhatter the pyramid would threaten the diſſolution of the continent.

They meaſured all its dimenſions, and pitched their tents at its foot. Next day they prepared to enter its interior apartments, and having hired the common guides, climbed up to the firſt paſſage, when the favourite of the Princeſs, looking into the cavity, ſtepped back and trembled. "Pekuah, ſaid the princeſs, of what art thou afraid?" "Of the narrow entrance, anſwered the lady, and of the dreadful gloom. I dare not enter a place which muſt ſurely be inhabited by unquiet ſouls. The original poſſeſſors of theſe dreadful vaults will ſtart up before us, and perhaps ſhut us in for ever." She ſpoke, and threw her arms round the neck of her miſtreſs.

"If all your fear be of apparitions, ſaid the prince, I will promiſe you ſafety: there is no danger from the dead; he that is once buried will be ſeen no more."

"That the dead are ſeen no more, ſaid Imlac, I will not undertake to maintain, againſt the concurrent and unvaried teſtimony of all ages, and of all nations. There is no people, rude or learned, among whom apparitions of the dead are not related and believed.

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This opinion, which perhaps prevails as far as human nature is diffuſed, could become univerſal only by its truth: thoſe, that never heard of one another, would not have agreed in a tale which nothing but experience can make credible. That it is doubted by ſingle cavillers, can very little weaken the general evidence; and ſome who deny it with their tongues confeſs it by their fears.

"Yet I do not mean to add new terrours to thoſe which have already ſeized upon Pekuah. There can be no reaſon why ſpectres ſhould haunt the pyramid more than other places, or why they ſhould have power or will to hurt innocence and purity. Our entrance is no violation of their privileges; we can take nothing from them, how then can we offend them?"

"My dear Pekuah, ſaid the princeſs, I will always go before you, and Imlac ſhall follow you. Remember that you are the companion of the princeſs of Abiſſinia."

"If the princeſs is pleaſed that her ſervant ſhould die, returned the lady, let her command ſome death leſs dreadful than encloſure in this horrid cavern. You know I dare not diſobey you; I muſt go if you command me; but, if I once enter, I never ſhall come back."

The princeſs ſaw that her fear was too ſtrong for expoſtulation or reproof, and embracing her, told her that ſhe ſhould ſtay in the tent till their return. Pekuah was yet not ſatisfied, but entreated the princeſs not to purſue ſo dreadful a purpoſe as that of entering the receſſes of the pyramid. "Though I cannot teach

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teach courage, ſaid Nekayah, I muſt not learn cowardice; nor leave at laſt undone what I came hither only to do."

CHAP. XXXI.

THEY ENTER THE PYRAMID.

PEKUAH deſcended to the tents, and the reſt entered the pyramid: they paſſed through the galleries, ſurveyed the vaults of marble, and examined the cheſt in which the body of the founder is ſuppoſed to have been repoſited. They then ſat down in one of the moſt ſpacious chambers to reſt a while before they attempted to return.

"We have now, ſaid Imlac, gratified our minds with an exact view of the greateſt work of man, except the wall of China.

"Of the wall it is very eaſy to aſſign the motive. It ſecured a wealthy and timorous nation from the incurſions of barbarians, whoſe unſkilfulneſs in arts made it eaſier for them to ſupply their wants by rapine than by induſtry, and who from time to time poured in upon the habitations of peaceful commerce, as vultures deſcend upon domeſtick fowl. Their celerity and fierceneſs made the wall neceſſary, and their ignorance made it efficacious.

"But for the pyramids no reaſon has ever been given adequate to the coſt and labour of the work. The narrowneſs of the chambers proves that it could afford no retreat from enemies, and treaſures might have been repoſited at far leſs expenſe with equal

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ſecurity. It ſeems to have been erected only in compliance with that hunger of imagination which preys inceſſantly upon life, and muſt be always appeaſed by ſome employment. Thoſe who have already all that they can enjoy, muſt enlarge their deſires. He that has built for uſe, till uſe is ſupplied, muſt begin to build for vanity, and extend his plan to the utmoſt power of human performance, that he may not be ſoon reduced to form another wiſh.

"I conſider this mighty ſtructure as a monument of the inſufficiency of human enjoyments. A king, whoſe power is unlimited, and whoſe treaſures ſurmount all real and imaginary wants, is compelled to ſolace, by the erection of a pyramid, the fatiety of dominion and taſteleſſneſs of pleaſures, and to amuſe the tediouſneſs of declining life, by ſeeing thouſands labouring without end, and one ſtone, for no purpoſe, laid upon another. Whoever thou art, that, not content with a moderate condition, imagineſt happineſs in royal magnificence, and dreameſt that command or riches can feed the appetite of novelty with perpetual gratifications, ſurvey the pyramids, and confeſs thy folly!"

CHAP. XXXII.

THE PRINCESS MEETS WITH AN UNEXPECTED MISFORTUNE.

They roſe up, and returned through the cavity at which they had entered, and the princeſs prepared for

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for her favourite a long narrative of dark labyrinths, and coſtly rooms, and of the different impreſſions which the varieties of the way had made upon her. But when they came to their train, they found every one ſilent and dejected: the men diſcovered ſhame and fear in their countenances, and the women were weeping in the tents.

What had happened they did not try to conjecture, but immediately inquired. "You had ſcarcely entered into the pyramid, ſaid one of the attendants, when a troop of Arabs ruſhed upon us: we were too few to reſiſt them, and too ſlow to eſcape. They were about to ſearch the tents, ſet us on our camels, and drive us along before them, when the approach of ſome Turkiſh horſemen put them to flight; but they ſeized the lady Pekuah with her two maids, and carried them away: the Turks are now purſuing them by our inſtigation, but I fear they will not be able to overtake them."

The princeſs was overpowered with ſurpriſe and grief. Raſſelas, in the firſt heat of his reſentment, ordered his ſervants to follow him, and prepared to purſue the robbers with his ſabre in his hand. "Sir, ſaid Imlac, what can you hope from violence or valour? the Arabs are mounted on horſes trained to battle and retreat; we have only beaſts of burden. By leaving our preſent ſtation we may loſe the princeſs, but cannot hope to regain Pekuah."

In a ſhort time the Turks returned, having not been able to reach the enemy. The princeſs burſt out into new lamentations, and Raſſelas could ſcarcely forbear to reproach them with cowardice; but Imlac was of opinion, that the eſcape of the Arabs was no addition to their

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their misfortune, for perhaps they would have killed their captives rather than have reſigned them.

CHAP. XXXIII.

THEY RETURN TO CAIRO WITHOUT PEKUAH.

THERE was nothing to be hoped from longer ſtay. They returned to Cairo repenting of their curioſity, cenſuring the negligence of the government, lamenting their own raſhneſs which had neglected to procure a guard, imagining many expedients by which the loſs of Pekuah might have been prevented, and reſolving to do ſomething for her recovery, though none could find any thing proper to be done.

Nekayah retired to her chamber, where her women attempted to comfort her, by telling her that all had their troubles, and that lady Pekuah had enjoyed much happineſs in the world for a long time, and might reaſonably expect a change of fortune. They hoped that ſome good would befall her whereſoever ſhe was, and that their miſtreſs would find another friend who might ſupply her place.

The Princeſs made them no anſwer, and they continued the form of condolence, not much grieved in their hearts that the favourite was loſt.

Next day the prince preſented to the Baſſa a memorial of the wrong which he had ſuffered, and a petition for redreſs. The Baſſa threatened to puniſh the robbers, but did not attempt to catch them, nor indeed, could any account or deſcription be given by which he might direct the purſuit.

It ſoon appeared that nothing would be done by authority.

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authority. Governors, being accuſtomed to hear of more crimes than they can puniſh, and more wrongs than they can redreſs, ſet themſelves at eaſe by indiſcriminate negligence, and preſently forget the requeſt when they loſe ſight of the petitioner.

Imlac then endeavoured to gain ſome intelligence by private agents. He found many who pretended to an exact knowledge of all the haunts of the Arabs, and to regular correſpondence with their chiefs, and who readily undertook the recovery of Pekuah. Of theſe, ſome were furniſhed with money for their journey, and came back no more; ſome were liberally paid for accounts which a few days diſcovered to be falſe. But the princeſs would not ſuffer any means, however improbable, to be left untried. While ſhe was doing ſomething ſhe kept her hope alive. As one expedient failed, another was ſuggeſted; when one meſſenger returned unſucceſsful, another was diſpatched to a different quarter.

Two months had now paſſed, and of Pekuah nothing had been heard; the hopes which they had endeavoured to raiſe in each other grew more languid, and the Princeſs, when ſhe ſaw nothing more to be tried, ſunk down inconſolable in hopeleſs dejection. A thouſand times ſhe reproached herſelf with the eaſy compliance, by which ſhe permitted her favourite to ſtay behind her. "Had not my fondneſs, ſaid ſhe, leſſened my authority, Pekuah had not dared to talk of her terrours. She ought to have feared me more than ſpectres. A ſevere look would have overpowered her; a peremptory command would have compelled obedience. Why did fooliſh indulgence prevail upon me? Why did I not ſpeak, and refuſe to hear?"

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"Great Princeſs, ſaid Imlac, do not reproach yourſelf for your virtue, or conſider that as blameable by which evil has accidentally been cauſed. Your tenderneſs for the timidity of Pekuah was generous and kind. When we act according to our duty, we commit the event to him by whoſe laws our actions are governed, and who will ſuffer none to be finally puniſhed for obedience. When, in proſpect of ſome good, whether natural or moral, we break the rules preſcribed us, we withdraw from the direction of ſuperiour wiſdom, and take all conſequences upon ourſelves. Man cannot ſo far know the connection of cauſes and events, as that he may venture to do wrong in order to do right. When we purſue our end by lawful means, we may always conſole our miſcarriage by the hope of future recompenſe. When we conſult only our own policy, and attempt to find a nearer way to good, by overleaping the ſettled boundaries of right and wrong, we cannot be happy even by ſucceſs, becauſe we cannot eſcape the conſciouſneſs of our fault; but, if we miſcarry, the diſappointment is irremediably embittered. How comfortleſs is the ſorrow of him who feels at once the pangs of guilt, and the vexation of calamity which guilt has brought upon him?

"Conſider, Princeſs, what would have been your condition, if the lady Pekuah had entreated to accompany you, and being compelled to ſtay in the tents, had been carried away; or how would you have borne the thought, if you had forced her into the pyramid, and ſhe had died before you in agonies of terrour?"

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"Had either happened, ſaid Nekayah, I could not have endured life till now: I ſhould have been tortured to madneſs by the remembrance of ſuch cruelty, or muſt have pined away in abhorrence of myſelf."

"This at leaſt, ſaid Imlac, is the preſent reward of virtuous conduct, that no unlucky conſequence can oblige us to repent it."

CHAP. XXXIV.

THE PRINCESS LANGUISHES FOR WANT OF PEKUAH.

NEKAYAH being thus reconciled to herſelf, found that no evil is inſupportable but that which is accompanied with conſciouſneſs of wrong. She was, from that time, delivered from the violence of tempeſtuous ſorrow, and ſunk into ſilent penſiveneſs and gloomy tranquillity. She ſat from morning to evening recollecting all that had been done or ſaid by her Pekuah, treaſured up with care every trifle on which Pekuah had ſet an accidental value, and which might recall to mind any little incident or careleſs converſation. The ſentiments of her, whom ſhe now expected to ſee no more, were treaſured in her memory as rules of life, and ſhe deliberated to no other end than to conjecture on any occaſion what would have been the opinion and counſel of Pekuah.

The women, by whom ſhe was attended, knew nothing of her real condition, and therefore ſhe could not talk to them but with caution and reſerve. She began to remit her curioſity, having no great care to

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to collect notions which she had no convenience of uttering. Rasselas endeavoured first to comfort, and afterwards to divert her; he hired musicians, to whom she seemed to listen, but did not hear them, and procured masters to instruct her in various arts, whose lectures, when they visited her again, were again to be repeated. She had lost her taste of pleasure, and her ambition of excellence. And her mind, though forced into short excursions, always recurred to the image of her friend.

Imlac was every morning earnestly enjoined to renew his inquiries, and was asked every night whether he had yet heard of Pekuah, till not being able to return the Princess the answer that she desired, he was less and less willing to come into her presence. She observed his backwardness, and commanded him to attend her. "You are not, said she, to confound impatience with resentment, or to suppose that I charge you with negligence, because I repine at your unsuccessfulness. I do not much wonder at your absence; I know that the unhappy are never pleasing, and that all naturally avoid the contagion of misery. To hear complaints is wearisome alike to the wretched and the happy; for who would cloud, by adventitious grief, the short gleams of gaiety which life allows us? or who, that is struggling under his own evils, will add to them the miseries of another?

"The time is at hand, when none shall be disturbed any longer by the sighs of Nekayah: my search after happiness is now at an end. I am resolved to retire from the world with all its flatteries and deceits, and will hide myself in solitude without any

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any other care than to compoſe my thoughts, and regulate my hours by a conſtant ſucceſſion of innocent occupations, till, with a mind purified from all earthly deſires, I ſhall enter into that ſtate, to which all are haſtening, and in which I hope again to enjoy the friendſhip of Pekuah."

"Do not entangle your mind, ſaid Imlac, by irrevocable determinations, nor increaſe the burden of life by a voluntary accumulation of miſery: the wearineſs of retirement will continue or increaſe when the loſs of Pekuah is forgotten. That you have been deprived of one pleaſure, is no very good reaſon for rejection of the reſt."

"Since Pekuah was taken from me, ſaid the Princeſs, I have no pleaſure to reject or to retain. She that has no one to love or truſt has little to hope. She wants the radical principle of happineſs. We may, perhaps, allow that what ſatisfaction this world can afford, muſt ariſe from the conjunction of wealth, knowledge, and goodneſs: wealth is nothing but as it is beſtowed, and knowledge nothing but as it is communicated: they muſt therefore be imparted to others, and to whom could I now delight to impart them? Goodneſs affords the only comfort which can be enjoyed without a partner, and goodneſs may be practiſed in retirement."

"How far ſolitude may admit goodneſs, or advance it, I ſhall not, replied Imlac, diſpute at preſent. Remember the confeſſion of the pious hermit. You will wiſh to return into the world, when the image of your companion has left your thoughts." "That time,

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ſaid Nekayah, will never come. The generous frankneſs, the modeſt obſequiouſneſs, and the faithful ſecrecy of my dear Pekuah, will always be more miſſed, as I ſhall live longer to ſee vice and folly."

"The ſtate of a mind oppreſſed with a ſudden calamity, ſaid Imlac, is like that of the fabulous inhabitants of the new created earth, who, when the firſt night came upon them, ſuppoſed that day would never return. When the clouds of ſorrow gather over us, we ſee nothing beyond them, nor can imagine how they will be diſpelled: yet a new day ſucceeded to the night, and ſorrow is never long without a dawn of eaſe. But they who reſtrain themſelves from receiving comfort, do as the ſavages would have done, had they put out their eyes when it was dark. Our minds, like our bodies, are in continual flux; ſomething is hourly loſt, and ſomething acquired. To loſe much at once is inconvenient to either, but while the vital powers remain uninjured, nature will find the means of reparation. Diſtance has the ſame effect on the mind as on the eye, and while we glide along the ſtream of time, whatever we leave behind us is always leſſening, and that which we approach increaſing in magnitude. Do not ſuffer life to ſtagnate; it will grow muddy for want of motion: commit yourſelf again to the current of the world; Pekuah will vaniſh by degrees; you will meet in your way ſome other favourite, or learn to diffuſe yourſelf in general converſation."

"At leaſt, ſaid the Prince, do not deſpair before all remedies have been tried: the inquiry after the unfortunate lady is ſtill continued, and ſhall be carried on

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with yet greater diligence, on condition that you will promiſe to wait a year for the event, without any unalterable reſolution."

Nekayah thought this a reaſonable demand, and made the promiſe to her brother, who had been adviſed by Imlac to require it. Imlac had, indeed, no great hope of regaining Pekuah, but he ſuppoſed, that if he could ſecure the interval of a year, the princeſs would be then in no danger of a cloiſter.

CHAP. XXXV.

PEKUAH IS STILL REMEMBERED. THE PROGRESS OF SORROW.

NEKAYAH, ſeeing that nothing was omitted for the recovery of her favourite, and having, by her promiſe, ſet her intention of retirement at a diſtance, began imperceptibly to return to common cares and common pleaſures. She rejoiced without her own conſent at the ſuſpenſion of her ſorrows, and ſometimes caught herſelf with indignation in the act of turning away her mind from the remembrance of her, whom yet ſhe reſolved never to forget.

She then appointed a certain hour of the day for meditation on the merits and fondneſs of Pekuah, and for ſome weeks retired conſtantly at the time fixed, and returned with her eyes ſwollen and her countenance clouded. By degrees ſhe grew leſs ſcrupulous, and ſuffered any important and preſſing avocation to delay the tribute of daily tears. She then yielded to leſs occaſions; ſometimes forgot what ſhe was indeed afraid

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to remember, and, at laſt, wholly releaſed herſelf from the duty of periodical affliction.

Her real love of Pekuah was yet not diminiſhed. A thouſand occurrences brought her back to memory, and a thouſand wants, which nothing but the confidence of friendſhip can ſupply, made her frequently regretted. She, therefore, ſolicited Imlac never to deſiſt from inquiry, and to leave no art of intelligence untried, that, at leaſt, ſhe might have the comfort of knowing that ſhe did not ſuffer by negligence or ſluggiſhneſs. "Yet what, ſaid ſhe, is to be expected from our purſuit of happineſs, when we find the ſtate of life to be ſuch, that happineſs itſelf is the cauſe of miſery? Why ſhould we endeavour to attain that, of which the poſſeſſion cannot be ſecured? I ſhall henceforward fear to yield my heart to excellence, however bright, or to fondneſs, however tender, leſt I ſhould loſe again what I have loſt in Pekuah."

CHAP. XXXVI.

THE PRINCESS HEARS NEWS OF PEKUAH.

In ſeven months, one of the meſſengers, who had been ſent away upon the day when the promiſe was drawn from the Princeſs, returned, after many unſucceſsful rambles from the borders of Nubia, with an account that Pekuah was in the hands of an Arab chief, who poſſeſſed a caſtle or fortreſs on the extremity of Egypt. The Arab, whoſe revenue was plunder, was willing to reſtore her, with her two attendants, for two hundred ounces of gold.

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The price was no ſubject of debate. The Princeſs was in ecſtaſies when ſhe heard that her favourite was alive, and might ſo cheaply be ranſomed. She could not think of delaying for a moment Pekuah's happineſs or her own, but entreated her brother to ſend back the meſſenger with the ſum required. Imlac being conſulted, was not very confident of the veracity of the relator, and was ſtill more doubtful of the Arab's faith, who might, if he were too liberally truſted, detain at once the money and the captives. He thought it dangerous to put themſelves in the power of the Arab, by going into his diſtrict, and could not expect that the Rover would ſo much expoſe himſelf as to come into the lower country, where he might be ſeized by the forces of the Baſſa.

It is difficult to negociate where neither will truſt. But Imlac, after ſome deliberation, directed the meſſenger to propoſe that Pekuah ſhould be conducted by ten horſemen to the monaſtery of St. Antony, which is ſituated in the deſerts of Upper Egypt, where ſhe ſhould be met by the ſame number, and her ranſom ſhould be paid.

That no time might be loſt, as they expected that the propoſal would not be refuſed, they immediately began their journey to the monaſtery; and when they arrived, Imlac went forward with the former meſſenger to the Arab's fortreſs. Raſſelas was deſirous to to go with them; but neither his ſiſter nor Imlac would conſent. The Arab, according to the cuſtom of his nation, obſerved the laws of hoſpitality with great exactneſs to thoſe who put themſelves into his power, and, in a few

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days, brought Pekuah with her maids, by eaſy journies, to the place appointed, where receiving the ſtipulated price, he reſtored her with great reſpect to liberty and her friends, and undertook to conduct them back towards Cairo beyond all danger of robbery or violence.

The Princeſs and her favourite embraced each other with tranſport too violent to be expreſſed, and went out together to pour the tears of tenderneſs in ſecret, and exchange profeſſions of kindneſs and gratitude. After a few hours they returned into the refectory of the convent, where, in the preſence of the prior and his brethren, the prince required of Pekuah the hiſtory of her adventures.

CHAP. XXXVII.

THE ADVENTURES OF THE LADY PEKUAH.

"At what time, and in what manner, I was forced away, ſaid Pekuah, your ſervants have told you. The ſuddenneſs of the event ſtruck me with ſurpriſe, and I was at firſt rather ſtupified than agitated with any paſſion of either fear or ſorrow. My confuſion was increaſed by the ſpeed and tumult of our flight, while we were followed by the Turks, who, as it ſeemed, ſoon deſpaired to overtake us, or were afraid of thoſe whom they made a ſhew of menacing.

"When the Arabs ſaw themſelves out of danger they ſlackened their courſe, and as I was leſs haraſſed by external violence, I began to feel more uneaſineſs in my mind. After ſome time we ſtopped near a ſpring ſhaded

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ſhaded with trees in a pleaſant meadow, where we were ſet upon the ground, and offered ſuch refreſhments as our maſters were partaking. I was ſuffered to ſit with my maids apart from the reſt, and none attempted to comfort or inſult us. Here I firſt began to feel the full weight of my miſery. The girls ſat weeping in ſilence, and from time to time looked on me for ſuccour. I knew not to what condition we were doomed, nor could conjecture where would be the place of our captivity, or whence to draw any hope of deliverance. I was in the hands of robbers and ſavages, and had no reaſon to ſuppoſe that their pity was more than their juſtice, or that they would forbear the gratification of any ardour of deſire, or caprice of cruelty. I, however, kiſſed my maids, and endeavoured to pacify them by remarking, that we were yet treated with decency, and that, ſince we were now carried beyond purſuit, there was no danger of violence to our lives.

" When we were to be ſet again on horſeback, my maids clung round me, and refuſed to be parted, but I commanded them not to irritate thoſe who had us in their power. We travelled the remaining part of the day through an unfrequented and pathleſs country, and came by moon-light to the ſide of a hill, where the reſt of the troop was ſtationed. Their tents were pitched, and their fires kindled, and our chief was welcomed as a man much beloved by his dependants.

" We were received into a large tent, where we found women who had attended their huſbands in the expedition. They ſet before us the ſupper which they had provided, and I eat it rather to encourage my

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maids than to comply with any appetite of my own. When the meat was taken away, they ſpread the carpets for repoſe. I was weary, and hoped to find in ſleep that remiſſion of diſtreſs which nature ſeldom denies. Ordering myſelf therefore to be undreſt, I obſerved that the women looked very earneſtly upon me, not expecting, I ſuppoſe, to ſee me ſo ſubmiſſively attended. When my upper veſt was taken off, they were apparently ſtruck with the ſplendour of my clothes, and one of them timorouſly laid her hand upon the embroidery. She then went out, and in a ſhort time came back with another woman, who ſeemed to be of higher rank, and greater authority. She did, at her entrance, the uſual act of reverence, and taking me by the hand, placed me in a ſmaller tent, ſpread with finer carpets, where I ſpent the night quietly with my maids.

"In the morning, as I was ſitting on the graſs, the chief of the troop came towards me. I roſe up to receive him, and he bowed with great reſpect. "Illuſtrious lady, ſaid he, my fortune is better than I had preſumed to hope; I am told by my women, that I have a princeſs in my camp." "Sir, anſwered I, your women have deceived themſelves and you; I am not a princeſs, but an unhappy ſtranger who intended ſoon to have left this country, in which I am now to be impriſoned for ever." "Whoever, or whenceſoever, you are, returned the Arab, your dreſs, and that of your ſervants, ſhew your rank to be high, and your wealth to be great. Why ſhould you, who can ſo eaſily procure your ranſom, think yourſelf in danger of perpetual captivity? The purpoſe of my incurſions

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is to increaſe my riches, or, more properly, to gather tribute. The ſons of Iſhmael are the natural and hereditary lords of this part of the continent, which is uſurped by late invaders, and low-born tyrants, from whom we are compelled to take by the ſword what is denied to juſtice. The violence of war admits no diſtinction: the lance that is lifted at guilt and power, will ſometimes fall on innocence and gentleneſs."

"How little, ſaid I, did I expect that yeſterday it ſhould have fallen upon me!"

"Misfortunes, anſwered the Arab, ſhould always be expected. If the eye of hoſtility could learn reverence or pity, excellence like yours had been exempt from injury. But the angels of affliction ſpread their toils alike for the virtuous and the wicked, for the mighty and the mean. Do not be diſconſolate: I am not one of the lawleſs and cruel rovers of the deſert; I know the rules of civil life: I will fix your ranſom, give a paſſport to your meſſenger, and perform my ſtipulation with nice punctuality."

"You will eaſily believe that I was pleaſed with his courteſy: and finding that his predominant paſſion was deſire of money, I began now to think my danger leſs, for I knew that no ſum would be thought too great for the releaſe of Pekuah. I told him, that he ſhould have no reaſon to charge me with ingratitude, if I was uſed with kindneſs, and that any ranſom which could be expected for a maid of common rank, would be paid; but that he muſt not perſiſt to rate me as a princeſs. He ſaid, he would conſider what he ſhould demand, and then ſmiling, bowed and retired.

"Soon after the women came about me, each con-

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tending to be more officious than the other, and my maids themſelves were ſerved with reverence. We travelled onward by ſhort journies. On the fourth day the chief told me, that my ranſom muſt be two hundred ounces of gold; which I not only promiſed him, but told him, that I would add fifty more, if I and my maids were honourably treated.

" I never knew the power of gold before. From that time I was the leader of the troop. The march of every day was longer or ſhorter as I commanded, and the tents were pitched where I choſe to reſt. We now had camels and other conveniencies for travel, my own women were always at my ſide, and I amuſed myſelf with obſerving the manners of the vagrant nations, and with viewing remains of ancient edifices, with which theſe deſerted countries appear to have been, in ſome diſtant age, laviſhly embelliſhed.

" The chief of the band was a man far from illiterate: he was able to travel by the ſtars or the compaſs, and had marked in his erratick expeditions, ſuch places as are moſt worthy the notice of a paſſenger. He obſerved to me, that buildings are always beſt preſerved in places little frequented, and difficult of acceſs: for, when once a country declines from its primitive ſplendour the more inhabitants are left, the quicker ruin will be made. Walls ſupply ſtones more eaſily than quarries, and palaces and temples will be demoliſhed, to make ſtables of granate, and cottages of porphyry.

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CHAP. XXXVIII.

THE ADVENTURES OF PEKUAH CONTINUED.

"We wandered about in this manner for ſome weeks, whether, as our chief pretended, for my gratification, or, as I rather ſuſpected, for ſome convenience of his own. I endeavoured to appear contented where ſullenneſs and reſentment would have been of no uſe, and that endeavour conduced much to the calmneſs of my mind; but my heart was always with Nekayah, and the troubles of the night much overbalanced the amuſements of the day. My women, who threw all their cares upon their miſtreſs, ſet their minds at eaſe from the time when they ſaw me treated with reſpect, and gave themſelves up to the incidental alleviations of our fatigue without ſolicitude or ſorrow. I was pleaſed with their pleaſure, and animated with their confidence. My condition had loſt much of its terrour, ſince I found that the Arab ranged the country merely to get riches. Avarice is an uniform and tractable vice: other intellectual diſtempers are different in different conſtitutions of mind; that which ſooths the pride of one will offend the pride of another; but to the favour of the covetous there is a ready way; bring money and nothing is denied.

"At laſt we came to the dwelling of our chief, a ſtrong and ſpacious houſe, built with ſtone in an iſland of the Nile, which lies, as I was told, under the tropick. "Lady, ſaid the Arab, you ſhall reſt after your journey a few weeks in this place, where you are to conſide

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conſider yourſelf as ſovereign. My occupation is war: I have therefore choſen this obſcure reſidence, from which I can iſſue unexpected, and to which I can retire unpurſued. You may now repoſe in ſecurity: here are few pleaſures, but here is no danger." He then led me into the inner apartments, and ſeating me on the richeſt couch, bowed to the ground. His women, who conſidered me as a rival, looked on me with malignity; but being ſoon informed that I was a great lady detained only for my ranſom, they began to vie with each other in obſequiouſneſs and reverence.

"Being again comforted with new aſſurances of ſpeedy liberty, I was for ſome days diverted from impatience by the novelty of the place. The turrets overlooked the country to a great diſtance, and afforded a view of many windings of the ſtream. In the day I wandered from one place to another, as the courſe of the ſun varied the ſplendour of the proſpect, and ſaw many things which I had never ſeen before. The crocodiles and river-horſes are common in this unpeopled region, and I often looked upon them with terrour, though I knew that they could not hurt me. For ſome time I expected to ſee mermaids and tritons, which, as Imlac has told me, the European travellers have ſtationed in the Nile, but no ſuch beings ever appeared, and the Arab, when I inquired after them, laughed at my credulity.

"At night the Arab always attended me to a tower ſet apart for celeſtial obſervations, where he endeavoured to teach me the names and courſes of the ſtars. I had no great inclination to this ſtudy, but an appearance of attention was neceſſary to pleaſe my inſtructor,

ſtructor, who valued himſelf for his ſkill; and in a little while, I found ſome employment requiſite to beguile the tedioufneſs of time, which was to be paſſed always amidſt the ſame objects. I was weary of looking in the morning on things from which I had turned away weary in the evening: I therefore was at laſt willing to obſerve the ſtars rather than do nothing, but could not always compoſe my thoughts, and was very often thinking on Nekayah, when others imagined me contemplating the ſky. Soon after the Arab went upon another expedition, and then my only pleaſure was to talk with my maids about the accident by which we were carried away, and the happineſs that we ſhould all enjoy at the end of our captivity."

"There were women in your Arab's fortreſs, ſaid the Princeſs, why did you not make them your companions, enjoy their converſation, and partake their diverſions? In a place where they found buſineſs or amuſement, why ſhould you alone ſit corroded with idle melancholy? or why could not you bear, for a few months, that condition to which they were condemned for life?"

"The diverſions of the women, anſwered Pekuah, were only childiſh play, by which the mind, accuſtomed to ſtronger operations, could not be kept buſy. I could do all which they delighted in doing by powers merely ſenſitive, while my intellectual faculties were flown to Cairo. They ran from room to room as a bird hops from wire to wire in his cage. They danced for the ſake of motion, as lambs friſk in a meadow. One ſometimes pretended to be hurt, that the reſt might be

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be alarmed; or hid herſelf, that another might ſeek her. Part of their time paſſed in watching the progreſs of light bodies that floated on the river, and part in marking the various forms into which clouds broke in the ſky.

"Their buſineſs was only needle-work, in which I and my maids ſometimes helped them; but you know that the mind will eaſily ſtraggle from the fingers, nor will you ſuſpect that captivity and abſence from Nekayah, could receive ſolace from ſilken flowers.

"Nor was much ſatisfaction to be hoped from their converſation: for of what could they be expected to talk? They had ſeen nothing; for they had lived from early youth in that narrow ſpot: of what they had not ſeen they could have no knowledge, for they could not read. They had no ideas but of the few things that were within their view, and had hardly names for any thing but their clothes and their food. As I bore a ſuperior character, I was often called to terminate their quarrels, which I decided as equitably as I could. If it could have amuſed me to hear the complaints of each againſt the reſt, I might have been often detained by long ſtories; but the motives of their animoſity were ſo ſmall that I could not liſten without intercepting the tale."

"How, ſaid Raſſelas, can the Arab, whom you repreſented as a man of more than common accompliſhments, take any pleaſure in his ſeraglio when it is filled only with women like theſe? Are they exquiſitely beautiful?"

"They

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"They do not, said Pekuah, want that unaffecting and ignoble beauty which may subsist without sprightliness or sublimity, without energy of thought or dignity of virtue. But to a man like the Arab, such beauty was only a flower casually plucked and carelessly thrown away. Whatever pleasures he might find among them, they were not those of friendship or society. When they were playing about him, he looked on them with inattentive superiority: when they vied for his regard, he sometimes turned away disgusted. As they had no knowledge, their talk could take nothing from the tediousness of life: as they had no choice, their fondness, or appearance of fondness, excited in him neither pride nor gratitude; he was not exalted in his own esteem by the smiles of a woman who saw no other man, nor was much obliged by that regard, of which he could never know the sincerity, and which he might often perceive to be exerted, not so much to delight him as to pain a rival. That which he gave, and they received, as love, was only a careless distribution of superfluous time, such love as man can bestow upon that which he despises, such has neither hope nor fear, neither joy nor sorrow."

"You have reason, lady, to think yourself happy, said Imlac, that you have been thus easily dismissed. How could a mind, hungry for knowledge, be willing, in an intellectual famine, to lose such a banquet as Pekuah's conversation?"

"I am inclined to believe, answered Pekuah, that he was for some time in suspense; for, notwithstanding

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ſtanding his promiſe, whenever I propoſed to diſpatch a meſſenger to Cairo, he found ſome excuſe for delay. While I was detained in his houſe he made many incurſions into the neighbouring countries, and, perhaps, he would have refuſed to diſcharge me, had his plunder been equal to his wiſhes. He returned always courteous, related his adventures, delighted to hear my obſervations, and endeavoured to advance my acquaintance with the ſtars. When I importuned him to ſend away my letters, he ſoothed me with profeſſions of honour and ſincerity; and, when I could be no longer decently denied, put his troop again in motion, and left me to govern in his abſence. I was much afflicted by this ſtudied procraſtination, and was ſometimes afraid that I ſhould be forgotten; that you would leave Cairo, and I muſt end my days in an iſland of the Nile.

"I grew at laſt hopeleſs and dejected, and cared ſo little to entertain him, that he for a while more frequently talked with my maids. That he ſhould fall in love with them, or with me, might have been equally fatal, and I was not much pleaſed with the growing friendſhip. My anxiety was not long: for, as I recovered ſome degree of cheerfulneſs, he returned to me, and I could not forbear to deſpiſe my former uneaſineſs.

"He ſtill delayed to ſend for my ranſom, and would, perhaps, never have determined, had not your agent found his way to him. The gold, which he would not fetch, he could not reject when it was offered. He haſtened to prepare for our journey hither,

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hither, like a man delivered from the pain of an inteſtine conflict. I took leave of my companions in the houſe, who diſmiſſed me with cold indifference."

Nekayah having heard her favourite's relation, roſe and embraced her, and Raſſelas gave her an hundred ounces of gold, which ſhe preſented to the Arab for the fifty that were promiſed.

CHAP. XXXIX.

THE HISTORY OF A MAN OF LEARNING.

THEY returned to Cairo, and were ſo well pleaſed at finding themſelves together, that none of them went much abroad. The Prince began to love learning, and one day declared to Imlac, that he intended to devote himſelf to ſcience, and paſs the reſt of his days in literary ſolitude.

"Before you make your final choice, anſwered Imlac, you ought to examine its hazards, and converſe with ſome of thoſe who are grown old in the company of themſelves. I have juſt left the obſervatory of one of the moſt learned aſtronomers in the world, who has ſpent forty years in unwearied attention to the motions and appearances of the celeſtial bodies, and has drawn out his ſoul in endleſs calculations. He admits a few friends once a month to hear his deductions and enjoy his diſcoveries. I was introduced as a man of knowledge worthy of his notice. Men of various ideas, and fluent converſation, are commonly welcome to thoſe whoſe thoughts have been long fixed upon a ſingle point, and who find the images of other things ſtealing away. I delighted him with my remarks; he ſmiled at

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at the narrative of my travels, and was glad to forget the conſtellations, and deſcend for a moment into the lower world.

" On the next day of vacation I renewed my viſit, and was ſo fortunate as to pleaſe him again. He relaxed from that time the ſeverity of his rule, and permitted me to enter at my own choice. I found him always buſy, and always glad to be relieved. As each knew much which the other was deſirous of learning, we exchanged our notions with great delight. I perceived that I had every day more of his confidence, and always found new cauſe of admiration in the profundity of his mind. His comprehenſion is vaſt, his memory capacious and retentive, his diſcourſe is methodical, and his expreſſion clear.

" His integrity and benevolence are equal to his learning. His deepeſt reſearches and moſt favourite ſtudies, are willingly interrupted for any opportunity of doing good by his counſel or his riches. To his cloſeſt retreat, at his moſt buſy moments, all are admitted that want his aſſiſtance: 'For though I exclude idleneſs and pleaſure, I will never, ſays he, bar my doors againſt charity. To man is permitted the contemplation of the ſkies, but the practice of virtue is commanded'."

" Surely, ſaid the Princeſs, this man is happy."

" I viſited him, ſaid Imlac, with more and more frequency, and was every time more enamoured of his converſation: he was ſublime without haughtineſs, courteous without formality, and communicative without oſtentation. I was at firſt, great Princeſs, of your opinion, thought him the happieſt of mankind, and often congratulated him on the bleſſing that he enjoyed.

He

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He ſeemed to hear nothing with indifference but the praiſes of his condition, to which he always returned a general anſwer, and diverted the converſation to ſome other topick.

" Amidſt this willingneſs to be pleaſed, and labour to pleaſe, I had quickly reaſon to imagine that ſome painful ſentiment preſſed upon his mind. He often looked up earneſtly towards the ſun, and let his voice fall in the midſt of his diſcourſe. He would ſometimes, when we were alone, gaze upon me in ſilence with the air of a man who longed to ſpeak what he was yet reſolved to ſuppreſs. He would often ſend for me with vehement injunctions of haſte, though, when I came to him, he had nothing extraordinary to ſay. And ſometimes, when I was leaving him, would call me back, pauſe a few moments, and then diſmiſs me."

CHAP. XL.

THE ASTRONOMER DISCOVERS THE CAUSE OF HIS UNEASINESS.

" At laſt the time came when the ſecret burſt his reſerve. We were ſitting together laſt night in the turret of his houſe, watching the emerſion of a ſatellite of Jupiter. A ſudden tempeſt clouded the ſky, and diſappointed our obſervation. We ſat a while ſilent in the dark, and then he addreſſed himſelf to me in theſe words: " Imlac, I have long conſidered thy friendſhip as the greateſt bleſſing of my life. Integrity without knowledge is weak and uſeleſs, and knowledge without integrity is dangerous and dreadful. I have found in thee all the qualities requiſite for truſt, bene-

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volence, experience, and fortitude. I have long discharged an office which I must soon quit at the call of nature, and shall rejoice in the hour of imbecility and pain to devolve it upon thee."

"I thought myself honoured by this testimony, and protested that whatever could conduce to his happiness would add likewise to mine."

"Hear Imlac, what thou wilt not without difficulty credit. I have possessed for five years the regulation of weather, and the distribution of the seasons: the sun has listened to my dictates, and passed from tropick to tropick by my direction; the clouds, at my call, have poured their waters, and the Nile has overflowed at my command; I have restrained the rage of the dog-star, and mitigated the fervours of the crab. The winds alone, of all the elemental powers, have hitherto refused my authority, and multitudes have perished by equinoctial tempests, which I found myself unable to prohibit or restrain. I have administered this great office with exact justice, and made to the different nations of the earth an impartial dividend of rain and sunshine. What must have been the misery of half the globe, if I had limited the clouds to particular regions, or confined the sun to either side of the equator!"

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CHAP. XLI.

THE OPINION OF THE ASTRONOMER IS EXPLAINED AND JUSTIFIED.

"I SUPPOSE he discovered in me, through the obscurity of the room, some tokens of amazement and doubt, for, after a short pause, he proceeded thus:"

"Not to be easily credited will neither surprise nor offend me; for I am, probably, the first of human beings to whom this trust has been imparted. Nor do I know whether to deem this distinction a reward or punishment; since I have possessed it I have been far less happy than before, and nothing but the consciousness of good intention could have enabled me to support the weariness of unremitted vigilance."

"How long, Sir, said I, has this great office been in your hands?"

"About ten years ago, said he, my daily observations of the changes of the sky led me to consider, whether, if I had the power of the seasons, I could confer greater plenty upon the inhabitants of the earth. This contemplation fastened on my mind, and I sat days and nights in imaginary dominion, pouring upon this country and that the showers of fertility, and seconding every fall of rain with a due proportion of sunshine. I had yet only the will to do good, and did not imagine that I should ever have the power.

"One day, as I was looking on the fields withering with heat, I felt in my mind a sudden wish that I could send rain on the southern mountains, and raise the

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Nile to an inundation. In the hurry of my imagination I commanded rain to fall, and by comparing the time of my command with that of the inundation, I found that the clouds had liſtened to my lips."

"Might not ſome other cauſe, ſaid I, produce this concurrence? the Nile does not always riſe on the ſame day."

"Do not believe, ſaid he, with impatience, that ſuch objections could eſcape me: I reaſoned long againſt my own conviction, and laboured againſt truth with the utmoſt obſtinacy. I ſometimes ſuſpected myſelf of madneſs, and ſhould not have dared to impart this ſecret but to a man like you, capable of diſtinguiſhing the wonderful from the impoſſible, and the incredible from the falſe."

"Why, Sir, ſaid I, do you call that incredible, which you know, or think you know, to be true?"

"Becauſe, ſaid he, I cannot prove it by any external evidence; and I know too well the laws of demonſtration to think that my conviction ought to influence another, who cannot, like me, be conſcious of its force. I, therefore, ſhall not attempt to gain credit by diſputation. It is ſufficient that I feel this power, that I have long poſſeſſed, and every day exerted it. But the life of man is ſhort, the infirmities of age increaſe upon me, and the time will ſoon come, when the regulator of the year muſt mingle with the duſt. The care of appointing a ſucceſſor has long diſturbed me; the night and the day have been ſpent in compariſons of all the characters which have come to my knowledge, and I have yet found none ſo worthy as thyſelf."

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CHAP. XLII.

THE ASTRONOMER LEAVES IMLAC HIS DIRECTIONS.

"HEAR, therefore, what I ſhall impart with attention, ſuch as the welfare of a world requires. If the taſk of a king be conſidered as difficult, who has the care only of a few millions, to whom he cannot do much good or harm, what muſt be the anxiety of him, on whom depends the action of the elements, and the great gifts of light and heat!—Hear me therefore with attention.

"I have diligently conſidered the poſition of the earth and ſun, and formed innumerable ſchemes in which I changed their ſituation. I have ſometimes turned aſide the axis of the earth, and ſometimes varied the ecliptick of the ſun: but I have found it impoſſible to make a diſpoſition by which the world may be advantaged; what one region gains, another loſes by an imaginable alteration, even without conſidering the diſtant parts of the ſolar ſyſtem with which we are unacquainted. Do not, therefore, in thy adminiſtration of the year, indulge thy pride by innovation; do not pleaſe thyſelf with thinking that thou canſt make thyſelf renowned to all future ages, by diſordering the ſeaſons. The memory of miſchief is no deſirable fame. Much leſs will it become thee to let kindneſs or intereſt prevail. Never rob other countries of rain to pour it on thine own. For us the Nile is ſufficient."

"I promiſed, that when I poſſeſſed the power, I would uſe it with inflexible integrity; and he diſ-

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miſſed me, preſſing my hand." "My heart, ſaid he, will be now at reſt, and my benevolence will no more deſtroy my quiet; I have found a man of wiſdom and virtue, to whom I can cheerfully bequeath the inheritance of the ſun."

The Prince heard this narration with very ſerious regard; but the Princeſs ſmiled, and Pekuah convulſed herſelf with laughter. "Ladies, ſaid Imlac, to mock the heavieſt of human afflictions is neither charitable nor wiſe. Few can attain this man's knowledge, and few practiſe his virtues; but all may ſuffer his calamity. Of the uncertainties of our preſent ſtate, the moſt dreadful and alarming is the uncertain continuance of reaſon."

The Princeſs was recollected, and the favourite was abaſhed. Raſſelas, more deeply affected, inquired of Imlac, whether he thought ſuch maladies of the mind frequent, and how they were contracted?

CHAP. XLIII.

THE DANGEROUS PREVALENCE OF IMAGINATION.

"DISORDERS of intellect, anſwered Imlac, happen much more often than ſuperficial obſervers will eaſily believe. Perhaps, if we ſpeak with rigorous exactneſs, no human mind is in its right ſtate. There is no man whoſe imagination does not ſometimes predominate over his reaſon, who can regulate his attention wholly by his will, and whoſe ideas will come and go at his command. No man will be found in whoſe mind airy notions do not ſometimes tyrannize, and force him to hope or fear beyond the limits of ſober probability.

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All power of fancy over reaſon is a degree of inſanity; but while this power is ſuch as we can controul and repreſs, it is not viſible to others, nor conſidered as any depravation of the mental faculties: it is not pronounced madneſs but when it becomes ungovernable, and apparently influences ſpeech or action.

"To indulge the power of fiction, and ſend imagination out upon the wing, is often the ſport of thoſe who delight too much in ſilent ſpeculation. When we are alone we are not always buſy; the labour of excogitation is too violent to laſt long; the ardour of inquiry will ſometimes give way to idleneſs or ſatiety. He who has nothing external that can divert him, muſt find pleaſure in his own thoughts, and muſt conceive himſelf what he is not; for who is pleaſed with what he is? He then expatiates in boundleſs futurity, and culls from all imaginable conditions that which for the preſent moment he ſhould moſt deſire, amuſes his deſires with impoſſible enjoyments, and confers upon his pride unattainable dominion. The mind dances from ſcene to ſcene, unites all pleaſures in all combinations, and riots in delights, which nature and fortune, with all their bounty, cannot beſtow.

"In time, ſome particular train of ideas fixes the attention, all other intellectual gratifications are rejected, the mind, in wearineſs or leiſure, recurs conſtantly to the favourite conception, and feaſts on the luſcious falſehood, whenever ſhe is offended with the bitterneſs of truth. By degrees the reign of fancy is confirmed; ſhe grows firſt imperious, and in time deſpotick. Then fictions begin to operate as realities,

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falſe opinions faſten upon the mind, and life paſſes in dreams of rapture or of anguiſh.

"This, Sir, is one of the dangers of ſolitude, which the hermit has confeſſed not always to promote goodneſs, and the aſtronomer's miſery has proved to be not always propitious to wiſdom."

"I will no more, ſaid the favourite, imagine myſelf the queen of Abiſſinia. I have often ſpent the hours, which the Princeſs gave to my own diſpoſal, in adjuſting ceremonies and regulating the court: I have repreſſed the pride of the powerful, and granted the petitions of the poor; I have built new palaces in more happy ſituations, planted groves upon the tops of mountains, and have exulted in the beneficence of royalty, till, when the Princeſs entered, I had almoſt forgotten to bow down before her."

"And I, ſaid the Princeſs, will not allow myſelf any more to play the ſhepherdeſs in my waking dreams. I have often ſoothed my thoughts with the quiet and innocence of paſtoral employments, till I have in my chamber heard the winds whiſtle, and the ſheep bleat: ſometimes freed the lamb entangled in the thicket, and ſometimes with my crook encountered the wolf. I have a dreſs like that of the village maids, which I put on to help my imagination, and a pipe on which I play ſoftly, and ſuppoſe myſelf followed by my flocks."

"I will confeſs, ſaid the Prince, an indulgence of fantaſtick delight more dangerous than yours. I have frequently endeavoured to image the poſſibility of a perfect government, by which all wrong ſhould be reſtrained, all vice reformed, and all the ſubjects preſerved

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ſerved in tranquillity and innocence. This thought produced innumerable ſchemes of reformation, and dictated many uſeful regulations and ſalutary edicts. This has been the ſport, and ſometimes the labour, of my ſolitude; and I ſtart, when I think with how little anguiſh I once ſuppoſed the death of my father and my brothers."

"Such, ſays Imlac, are the effects of viſionary ſchemes: when we firſt form them we know them to be abſurd, but familiarize them by degrees, and in time loſe ſight of their folly."

CHAP. XLIV.

THEY DISCOURSE WITH AN OLD MAN.

THE evening was now far paſt, and they roſe to return home. As they walked along the bank of the Nile, delighted with the beams of the moon quivering on the water, they ſaw at a ſmall diſtance an old man, whom the Prince had often heard in the aſſembly of the ſages. "Yonder, ſaid he, is one whoſe years have calmed his paſſions, but not clouded his reaſon: let us cloſe the diſquiſitions of the night, by inquiring what are his ſentiments of his own ſtate, that we may know whether youth alone is to ſtruggle with vexation, and whether any better hope remains for the latter part of life."

Here the ſage approached and ſaluted them. They invited him to join their walk, and prattled a while, as acquaintance that had unexpectedly met one another. The

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The old man was cheerful and talkative, and the way ſeemed ſhort in his company. He was pleaſed to find himſelf not diſregarded, accompanied them to their houſe, and, at the Prince's requeſt, entered with them. They placed him in the ſeat of honour, and ſet wine and conſerves before him.

"Sir, ſaid the Princeſs, an evening walk muſt give to a man of learning, like you, pleaſures which ignorance and youth can hardly conceive. You know the qualities and the cauſes of all that you behold, the laws by which the river flows, the periods in which the planets perform their revolutions. Every thing muſt ſupply you with contemplation, and renew the conſciouſneſs of your own dignity."

"Lady, anſwered he, let the gay and the vigorous expect pleaſure in their excurſions; it is enough that age can obtain eaſe. To me the world has loſt its novelty: I look round, and ſee what I remember to have ſeen in happier days. I reſt againſt a tree, and conſider that in the ſame ſhade I once diſputed upon the annual overflow of the Nile with a friend who is now ſilent in the grave. I caſt my eyes upwards, fix them on the changing moon, and think with pain on the viciſſitudes of life. I have ceaſed to take much delight in phyſical truth; for what have I to do with thoſe things which I am ſoon to leave?"

"You may at leaſt recreate yourſelf, ſaid Imlac, with the recollection of an honourable and uſeful life, and enjoy the praiſe which all agree to give you."

"Praiſe, ſaid the ſage, with a ſigh, is to an old man an empty ſound. I have neither mother to be delighted

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lighted with the reputation of her ſon, nor wife to partake the honours of her huſband. I have outlived my friends and my rivals. Nothing is now of much importance; for I cannot extend my intereſt beyond myſelf. Youth is delighted with applauſe, becauſe it is conſidered as the earneſt of ſome future good, and becauſe the proſpect of life is far extended: but to me, who am now declining to decrepitude, there is little to be feared from the malevolence of men, and yet leſs to be hoped from their affection or eſteem. Something they may yet take away, but they can give me nothing. Riches would now be uſeleſs, and high employment would be pain. My retroſpect of life recalls to my view many opportunities of good neglected, much time ſquandered upon trifles, and more loſt in idleneſs and vacancy. I leave many great deſigns unattempted, and many great attempts unfiniſhed. My mind is burdened with no heavy crime, and therefore I compoſe myſelf to tranquillity; endeavour to abſtract my thoughts from hopes and cares, which, though reaſon knows them to be vain, ſtill try to keep their old poſſeſſion of the heart; expect, with ſerene humility, that hour which nature cannot long delay; and hope to poſſeſs, in a better ſtate, that happineſs which here I could not find, and that virtue which here I have not attained."

He roſe and went away, leaving his audience not much elated with the hope of long life. The Prince conſoled himſelf with remarking, that it was not reaſonable to be diſappointed by this account; for age had never been conſidered as the ſeaſon of felicity, and if it was poſſible to be eaſy in decline and weakneſs, it was likely that the days of vigour and alacrity might

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might be happy: that the noon of life might be bright, if the evening could be calm.

The Princeſs ſuſpected that age was querulous and malignant, and delighted to repreſs the expectations of thoſe who had newly entered the world. She had ſeen the poſſeſſors of eſtates look with envy on their heirs, and known many who enjoyed pleaſure no longer than they can confine it to themſelves.

Pekuah conjectured, that the man was older than he appeared, and was willing to impute his complaints to delirious dejection: or elſe ſuppoſed that he had been unfortunate, and was therefore diſcontented: "For nothing, ſaid ſhe, is more common, than to call our own condition, the condition of life."

Imlac, who had no deſire to ſee them depreſſed, ſmiled at the comforts which they could ſo readily procure to themſelves, and remembered, that at the ſame age, he was equally confident of unmingled proſperity, and equally fertile of conſolatory expedients. He forbore to force upon them unwelcome knowledge, which time itſelf would too ſoon impreſs. The Princeſs and her lady retired; the madneſs of the aſtronomer hung upon their minds, and they deſired Imlac to enter upon his office, and delay next morning the riſing of the ſun.

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CHAP. XLV.

THE PRINCESS AND PEKUAH VISIT THE ASTRONOMER.

THE Princeſs and Pekuah having talked in private of Imlac's aſtronomer, thought his character at once ſo amiable and ſo ſtrange, that they could not be ſatisfied without a nearer knowledge; and Imlac was requeſted to find the means of bringing them together.

This was ſomewhat difficult; the philoſopher had never received any viſits from women, though he lived in a city that had in it many Europeans who followed the manners of their own countries, and many from other parts of the world, that lived there with European liberty. The ladies would not be refuſed, and ſeveral ſchemes were propoſed for the accompliſhment of their deſign. It was propoſed to introduce them as ſtrangers in diſtreſs, to whom the ſage was always acceſſible; but after ſome deliberation, it appeared, that by this artifice, no acquaintance could be formed, for their converſation would be ſhort, and they could not decently importune him often. "This, ſaid Raſſelas, is true; but I have yet a ſtronger objection againſt the miſrepreſentation of your ſtate. I have always conſidered it as treaſon againſt the great republick of human nature, to make any man's virtues the means of deceiving him, whether on great or little occaſions. All impoſture weakens confidence, and chills benevolence. When the ſage finds that you are not what you ſeemed, he will feel the reſentment natural to

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to a man who, conſcious of great abilities, diſcovers that he has been tricked by underſtandings meaner than his own, and, perhaps, the diſtruſt, which he can never afterwards wholly lay aſide, may ſtop the voice of counſel, and cloſe the hand of charity; and where will you find the power of reſtoring his benefactions to mankind, or his peace to himſelf?"

To this no reply was attempted, and Imlac began to hope that their curioſity would ſubſide; but, next day, Pekuah told him, ſhe had now found an honeſt pretence for a viſit to the aſtronomer, for ſhe would ſolicit permiſſion to continue under him the ſtudies in which ſhe had been initiated by the Arab, and the Princeſs might go with her either as a fellow-ſtudent, or becauſe a woman could not decently come alone. "I am afraid, ſaid Imlac, that he will be ſoon weary of your company: men advanced far in knowledge do not love to repeat the elements of their art, and I am not certain that even of the elements, as he will deliver them connected with inferences, and mingled with reflections, you are a very capable auditreſs." "That, ſaid Pekuah, muſt be my care: I aſk of you only to take me thither. My knowledge is, perhaps, more than you imagine it, and, by concurring always with his opinions, I ſhall make him think it greater than it is."

The aſtronomer, in purſuance of this reſolution, was told, that a foreign lady, travelling in ſearch of knowledge, had heard of his reputation, and was deſirous to become his ſcholar. The uncommonneſs of the propoſal raiſed at once his ſurpriſe and curioſity; and when, after a ſhort deliberation, he conſented to admit

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her, he could not ſtay without impatience till the next day.

The ladies dreſſed themſelves magnificently, and were attended by Imlac to the aſtronomer, who was pleaſed to ſee himſelf approached with reſpect by perſons of ſo ſplendid an appearance. In the exchange of the firſt civilities he was timorous and baſhful; but when the talk became regular, he recollected his powers, and juſtified the character which Imlac had given. Inquiring of Pekuah, what could have turned her inclination towards aſtronomy? he received from her a hiſtory of her adventure at the pyramid, and of the time paſſed in the Arab's iſland. She told her tale with eaſe and elegance, and her converſation took poſſeſſion of his heart. The diſcourſe was then turned to aſtronomy; Pekuah diſplayed what ſhe knew: he looked upon her as a prodigy of genius, and entreated her not to deſiſt from a ſtudy which ſhe had ſo happily begun.

They came again, and again, and were every time more welcome than before. The ſage endeavoured to amuſe them, that they might prolong their viſits, for he found his thoughts grow brighter in their company; the clouds of ſolicitude vaniſhed by degrees, as he forced himſelf to entertain them, and he grieved when he was left at their departure to his old employment of regulating the ſeaſons.

The Princeſs and her favourite had now watched his lips for ſeveral months, and could not catch a ſingle word from which they could judge whether he continued, or not, in the opinion of his preternatural commiſſion. They often contrived to bring him to an

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open declaration; but he eaſily eluded all their attacks, and on which ſide ſoever they preſſed him, eſcaped from them to ſome other topick.

As their familiarity increaſed, they invited him often to the houſe of Imlac, where they diſtinguiſhed him by extraordinary reſpect. He began gradually to delight in ſublunary pleaſures. He came early, and departed late; laboured to recommend himſelf by aſſiduity and compliance; excited their curioſity after new arts, that they might ſtill want his aſſiſtance; and when they made any excurſion of pleaſure or inquiry, entreated to attend them.

By long experience of his integrity and wiſdom, the Prince and his ſiſter were convinced that he might be truſted without danger; and leſt he ſhould draw any falſe hopes from the civilities which he received, diſcovered to him their condition, with the motives of their journey; and required his opinion on the choice of life.

"Of the various conditions which the world ſpreads before you, which you ſhall prefer, ſaid the ſage, I am not able to inſtruct you. I can only tell that I have choſen wrong. I have paſſed my time in ſtudy without experience; in the attainment of ſciences which can, for the moſt part, be but remotely uſeful to mankind. I have purchaſed knowledge at the expenſe of all the common comforts of life: I have miſſed the endearing elegance of female friendſhip, and the happy commerce of domeſtick tenderneſs. If I have obtained any prerogatives above other ſtudents, they have been accompanied with fear, diſquiet, and ſcrupuloſity; but even of theſe prerogatives, whatever they were, I have,

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ſince my thoughts have been diverſified by more intercourſe with the world, begun to queſtion the reality. When I have been for a few days loſt in pleaſing diſſipation, I am always tempted to think that my inquiries have ended in errour, and that I have ſuffered much, and ſuffered it in vain."

Imlac was delighted to find that the ſage's underſtanding was breaking through its miſts, and reſolved to detain him from the planets till he ſhould forget his taſk of ruling them, and reaſon ſhould recover its original influence.

From this time the aſtronomer was received into familiar friendſhip, and partook of all their projects and pleaſures: his reſpect kept him attentive, and the activity of Raſſelas did not leave much time unengaged. Something was always to be done; the day was ſpent in making obſervations which furniſhed talk for the evening, and the evening was cloſed with a ſcheme for the morrow.

The ſage confeſſed to Imlac, that ſince he had mingled in the gay tumults of life, and divided his hours by a ſucceſſion of amuſements, he found the conviction of his authority over the ſkies fade gradually from his mind, and began to truſt leſs to an opinion which he never could prove to others, and which he now found ſubject to variation, from cauſes in which reaſon had no part. "If I am accidentally left alone for a few hours, ſaid he, my inveterate perſuaſion ruſhes upon my ſoul, and my thoughts are chained down by ſome irreſiſtible violence; but they are ſoon diſentangled by the prince's converſation, and inſtantaneouſly releaſed at the entrance of Pekuah. I am like a man habitually afraid of ſpectres,

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who is ſet at eaſe by a lamp, and wonders at the dread which haraſſed him in the dark; yet, if his lamp be extinguiſhed, feels again the terrours which he knows that when it is light he ſhall feel no more. But I am ſometimes afraid leſt I indulge my quiet by criminal negligence, and voluntarily forget the great charge with which I am intruſted. If I favour myſelf in a known errour, or am determined by my own eaſe in a doubtful queſtion of this importance, how dreadful is my crime!"

"No diſeaſe of the imagination, anſwered Imlac, is ſo difficult of cure, as that which is complicated with the dread of guilt: fancy and conſcience then act interchangeably upon us, and ſo often ſhift their places, that the illuſions of one are not diſtinguiſhed from the dictates of the other. If fancy preſents images not moral or religious, the mind drives them away when they give it pain, but when melancholick notions take the form of duty, they lay hold on the faculties without oppoſition, becauſe we are afraid to exclude or baniſh them. For this reaſon the ſuperſtitious are often melancholy, and the melancholy almoſt always ſuperſtitious.

"But do not let the ſuggeſtions of timidity overpower your better reaſon: the danger of neglect can be but as the probability of the obligation, which when you conſider it with freedom, you find very little, and that little growing every day leſs. Open your heart to the influence of the light, which from time to time breaks in upon you: when ſcruples importune you, which you in your lucid moments know to be vain, do not ſtand to parley, but fly to buſineſs or to Pekuah,

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and keep this thought always prevalent, that you are only one atom of the maſs of humanity, and have neither ſuch virtue nor vice, as that you ſhould be ſingled out for ſupernatural favours or afflictions."

CHAP. XLVI.

THE PRINCE ENTERS, AND BRINGS A NEW TOPICK.

"ALL this, ſaid the Aſtronomer, I have often thought, but my reaſon has been ſo long ſubjugated by an uncontrolable and overwhelming idea, that it durſt not confide in its own deciſions. I now ſee how fatally I betrayed my quiet, by ſuffering chimeras to prey upon me in ſecret; but melancholy ſhrinks from communication, and I never found a man before, to whom I could impart my troubles, though I had been certain of relief. I rejoice to find my own ſentiments confirmed by yours, who are not eaſily deceived, and can have no motive or purpoſe to deceive. I hope that time and variety will diſſipate the gloom that has ſo long ſurrounded me, and the latter part of my days will be ſpent in peace."

"Your learning and virtue, ſaid Imlac, may juſtly give you hopes."

Raſſelas then entered with the Princeſs and Pekuah, and inquired, whether they had contrived any new diverſion for the next day? "Such, ſaid Nekayah, is the ſtate of life, that none are happy but by the anticipation of change: the change itſelf is nothing: when we have made it, the next wiſh is to change again.

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again. The world is not yet exhauſted; let me ſee ſomething to-morrow which I never ſaw before."

"Variety, ſaid Raſſelas, is ſo neceſſary to content, that even the Happy Valley diſguſted me by the recurrence of its luxuries; yet I could not forbear to reproach myſelf with impatience, when I ſaw the monks of St. Anthony ſupport, without complaint, a life not of uniform delight, but uniform hardſhip."

"Thoſe men, anſwered Imlac, are leſs wretched in their ſilent convent than the Abiſſinian princes in their priſon of pleaſure. Whatever is done by the monks is incited by an adequate and reaſonable motive. Their labour ſupplies them with neceſſaries; it therefore cannot be omitted, and is certainly rewarded. Their devotion prepares them for another ſtate, and reminds them of its approach, while it fits them for it. Their time is regularly diſtributed; one duty ſucceeds another, ſo that they are not left open to the diſtraction of unguided choice, nor loſt in the ſhades of liſtleſs inactivity. There is a certain taſk to be performed at an appropriated hour; and their toils are cheerful, becauſe they conſider them as acts of piety, by which they are always advancing towards endleſs felicity."

"Do you think, ſaid Nekayah, that the monaſtick rule is a more holy and leſs imperfect ſtate than any other? May not he equally hope for future happineſs who converſes openly with mankind, who ſuccours the diſtreſſed by his charity, inſtructs the ignorant by his learning, and contributes by his induſtry to the general ſyſtem of life; even though he ſhould omit ſome of the mortifications which are practiſed in the cloiſter, and

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allow himſelf ſuch harmleſs delights as his condition may place within his reach?"

"This, ſaid Imlac, is a queſtion which has long divided the wiſe, and perplexed the good. I am afraid to decide on either part. He that lives well in the world is better than he that lives well in a monaſtery. But, perhaps, every one is not able to ſtem the temptations of publick life; and if he cannot conquer, he may properly retreat. Some have little power to do good, and have likewiſe little ſtrength to reſiſt evil. Many are weary of their conflicts with adverſity, and are willing to eject thoſe paſſions which have long bufied them in vain. And many are diſmiſſed by age and diſeaſes from the more laborious duties of ſociety. In monaſteries the weak and timorous may be happily ſheltered, the weary may repoſe, and the penitent may meditate. Thoſe retreats of prayer and contemplation have ſomething ſo congenial to the mind of man, that, perhaps, there is ſcarcely one that does not propoſe to cloſe his life in pious abſtraction with a few aſſociates ſerious as himſelf."

"Such, ſaid Pekuah, has often been my wiſh, and I have heard the Princeſs declare, that ſhe ſhould not willingly die in a crowd."

"The liberty of uſing harmleſs pleaſures, proceeded Imlac, will not be diſputed; but it is ſtill to be examined what pleaſures are harmleſs. The evil of any pleaſure that Nekayah can image is not in the act itſelf, but in its conſequences. Pleaſure, in itſelf harmleſs, may become miſchievous, by endearing to us a ſtate which we know to be tranſient and probatory, and

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withdrawing our thoughts from that, of which every hour brings us nearer to the beginning, and of which no length of time will bring us to the end. Mortification is not virtuous in itſelf, nor has any other uſe, but that it diſengages us from the allurements of ſenſe. In the ſtate of future perfection, to which we all aſpire, there will be pleaſure without danger, and ſecurity without reſtraint."

The Princeſs was ſilent, and Raſſelas, turning to the Aſtronomer, aſked him, whether he could not delay her retreat, by ſhewing her ſomething which ſhe had not ſeen before.

"Your curioſity, ſaid the Sage, has been ſo general, and your purſuit of knowledge ſo vigorous, that novelties are not now very eaſily to be found: but what you can no longer procure from the living may be given by the dead. Among the wonders of this country are the Catacombs, or the ancient repoſitories, in which the bodies of the earlieſt generations were lodged, and where, by the virtue of the gums which embalmed them, they yet remain without corruption."

"I know not, ſaid Raſſelas, what pleaſure the ſight of the catacombs can afford; but, ſince nothing elſe offered, I am reſolved to view them, and ſhall place this with many other things which I have done, becauſe I would do ſomething."

They hired a guard of horſemen, and the next day viſited the catacombs. When they were about to deſcend into the ſepulchral caves, "Pekuah, ſaid the Princeſs, we are now again invading the habitations of the dead; I know that you will ſtay behind; let me find

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find you ſafe when I return." "No, I will not be left, anſwered Pekuah; I will go down between you and the Prince."

They then all deſcended, and roved with wonder through the labyrinth of ſubterraneous paſſages, where the bodies were laid in rows on either ſide.

CHAP. XLVII.

IMLAC DISCOURSES ON THE NATURE OF THE SOUL.

"WHAT reaſon, ſaid the Prince, can be given, why the Egyptians ſhould thus expenſively preſerve thoſe carcaſes which ſome nations conſume with fire, others lay to mingle with the earth, and all agree to remove from their ſight, as ſoon as decent rites can be performed?"

"The original of ancient cuſtoms, ſaid Imlac, is commonly unknown; for the practice often continues when the cauſe has ceaſed; and concerning ſuperſtitious ceremonies it is vain to conjecture; for what reaſon did not dictate, reaſon cannot explain. I have long believed that the practice of embalming aroſe only from tenderneſs to the remains of relations or friends, and to this opinion I am more inclined, becauſe it ſeems impoſſible that this care ſhould have been general: had all the dead been embalmed, their repoſitories muſt in time have been more ſpacious than the dwellings of the living. I ſuppoſe only the rich or honourable were ſecured from corruption, and the reſt left to the courſe of nature.

"But

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" But it is commonly ſuppoſed that the Egyptians believed the ſoul to live as long as the body continued undiſſolved, and therefore tried this method of eluding death."

" Could the wiſe Egyptians, ſaid Nekayah, think ſo groſsly of the ſoul? If the ſoul could once ſurvive its ſeparation, what could it afterwards receive or ſuffer from the body?"

" The Egyptians would doubtleſs think erroneouſly, ſaid the Aſtronomer, in the darkneſs of heatheniſm, and the firſt dawn of philoſophy. The nature of the ſoul is ſtill diſputed amidſt all our opportunities of clearer knowledge: ſome yet ſay, that it may be material, who, nevertheleſs, believe it to be immortal."

" Some, anſwered Imlac, have indeed ſaid that the ſoul is material, but I can ſcarcely believe that any man has thought it, who knew how to think; for all the concluſions of reaſon enforce the immateriality of mind, and all the notices of ſenſe and inveſtigations of ſcience, concur to prove the unconſciouſneſs of matter.

" It was never ſuppoſed that cogitation is inherent in matter, or that every particle is a thinking being. Yet, if any part of matter be devoid of thought, what part can we ſuppoſe to think? Matter can differ from matter only in form, denſity, bulk, motion, and direction of motion: to which of theſe, however varied or combined, can conſciouſneſs be annexed? To be round or ſquare, to be ſolid or fluid, to be great or little, to be moved ſlowly or ſwiftly one way or another, are modes of material exiſtence, all equally alien from the nature of cogitation. If matter be once without thought,

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thought, it can only be made to think by ſome new modification, but all the modifications which it can admit are equally unconnected with cogitative powers."

"But the materialiſts, ſaid the Aſtronomer, urge that matter may have qualities with which we are unacquainted."

"He who will determine, returned Imlac, againſt that which he knows, becauſe there may be ſomething, which he knows not; he that can ſet hypothetical poſſibility againſt acknowledged certainty, is not to be admitted among reaſonable beings. All that we know of matter is, that matter is inert, ſenſeleſs, and lifeleſs; and if this conviction cannot be oppoſed but by referring us to ſomething that we know not, we have all the evidence that human intellect can admit. If that which is known may be overruled by that which is unknown, no being not omniſcient, can arrive at certainty."

"Yet let us not, ſaid the Aſtronomer, too arrogantly limit the Creator's power."

"It is no limitation of omnipotence, replied the poet, to ſuppoſe that one thing is not conſiſtent with another, that the ſame propoſition cannot be at once true and falſe, that the ſame number cannot be even and odd, that cogitation cannot be conferred on that which is created incapable of cogitation."

"I know not, ſaid Nekayah, any great uſe of this queſtion. Does that immateriality, which, in my opinion, you have ſufficiently proved, neceſſarily include eternal duration?"

"Of immateriality, ſaid Imlac, our ideas are negative, and therefore obſcure. Immateriality ſeems to

to imply a natural power of perpetual duration, as a conſequence of exemption from all cauſes of decay: whatever periſhes is deſtroyed by the ſolution of its contexture, and ſeparation of its parts; nor can we conceive how that which has no parts, and therefore admits no ſolution, can be naturally corrupted or impaired."

"I know not, ſaid Raſſelas, how to conceive any thing without extenſion; what is extended muſt have parts, and you allow, that whatever has parts may be deſtroyed."

"Conſider your own conceptions, replied Imlac, and the difficulty will be leſs. You will find ſubſtance without extenſion. An ideal form is no leſs real than material bulk: yet an ideal form has no extenſion. It is no leſs certain, when you think on a pyramid, that your mind poſſeſſes the idea of a pyramid, than that the pyramid itſelf is ſtanding. What ſpace does the idea of a pyramid occupy more than the idea of a grain of corn? or how can either idea ſuffer laceration? As is the effect, ſuch is the cauſe: as thought, ſuch is the power that thinks; a power impaſſive and indiſcerptible."

"But the Being, ſaid Nekayah, whom I fear to name, the Being which made the ſoul, can deſtroy it."

"He, ſurely, can deſtroy it, anſwered Imlac, ſince, however unperiſhable, it receives from a ſuperiour nature its power of duration. That it will not periſh by any inherent cauſe of decay, or principle of corruption, may be ſhewn by philoſophy; but philoſophy can tell no more. That it will not be annihilated by him that made it, we muſt humbly learn from higher authority."

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The whole assembly stood awile silent and collected. "Let us return, said Rasselas from this scene of mortality. How gloomy would be these mansions of the dead to him who did uot know that he should never die; that what now acts shall continue its agency, and what now thinks shall think on for ever. Those that lie here stretched before us, the wise and the powerful of ancient times, warn us to remember the shortness of our present state: they were, perhaps, snatched away while they were busy like us in the choice of life."

"To me, said the Princess, the choice of life is become less important; I hope hereafter to think only on the choice of eternity."

They then hastened out of the caverns, and, under the protection of their guard, returned to Cairo.

CHAP. XLVIII.

THE CONCLUSION, IN WHICH NOTHING IS CONCLUDED.

It was now the time of the inundation of the Nile: a few days after their visit to the catacombs, the river began to rise.

They were confined to their house. The whole region being under water gave them no invitation to any excursions, and, being well supplied with materials for talk, they diverted themselves with comparisons of the different forms of life which they had observed, and with various schemes of happiness, which each of them had formed.

Pekuah

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Pekuah was never ſo much charmed with any place as the convent of St. Anthony, where the Arab reſtored her to the Princeſs, and wiſhed only to fill it with pious maidens, and to be made prioreſs of the order: ſhe was weary of expectation and diſguſt, and would gladly be fixed in ſome unvariable ſtate.

The Princeſs thought, that of all ſublunary things knowledge was the beſt: ſhe deſired firſt to learn all ſciences, and then purpoſed to found a college of learned women, in which ſhe would preſide, that, by converſing with the old, and educating the young, ſhe might divide her time between the acquiſition and communication of wiſdom, and raiſe up for the next age models of prudence, and patterns of piety.

The Prince deſired a little kingdom, in which he might adminiſter juſtice in his own perſon, and ſee all the parts of government with his own eyes; but he could never fix the limits of his dominion, and was always adding to the number of his ſubjects.

Imlac and the Aſtronomer were contented to be driven along the ſtream of life, without directing their courſe to any particular port.

Of theſe wiſhes that they had formed they well knew that none could be obtained. They deliberated awhile what was to be done, and reſolved, when the inundation ſhould ceaſe, to return to Abiſſinia.

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.

Luke Hanſard, printer,
near Lincoln's-Inn Fields.

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